CHRISTS COMMVNION With his CHVRCH MILITANT.

Rob: Cock.

First preached, and now published for the good of Gods Church in generall.

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The third Edition.

BY

NICHOLAS LOCKYER, Master of Arts.

Cant. 1. 13. *A bundle of Myrrhe is my Welbeloved unto me, he shall lye all night betwixt my breasts.*

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TO

The vertuous Lady Aunt, SUSAN CECILL,

Grace and peace be multiplyed

BY

IESUS CHRIST.

Madam:

THe *ſweet taſte I have had of your Ladyſhips love to the beſt things, hath encouraged mee, humbly to preſent this little tract unto you. What* Salomon *ſpeaks from experience, that you upon triall have*

found true, That the most promising contents of this life, are vanitie and vexation of Spirit. *Our wise and mercifull Father doth usually thus imbitter the sweetest things of this world to us, that wee may the more cordially relish, and fervently seek after that full satisfying, and everlasting sweetnesse and comfort, which is in Communion with Christ our heavenly Husband, in whom all fulnesse of consolation dwels. A drop of this transcendent fulnesse, your Ladyship (I hope) shall find distilled into your soule, by reading this little work now come to your hands, which like* Aqua Vitæ, *shall cheere and revive your sad spirit, when ready to faint.*

Fainting

Fainting persons, carrie little bottles of reviving liquids, alwayes about them; if your Ladyship shall think fit, to make this little tract your pocket-Companion, and peruse a little of it still, when you feele soule-qualmes to seize upon you; you shall find (I trust) through the blessing of Christ, much ease and comfort; and so spend and end your aged dayes, in more true solace of heart, than yet you have done your primest dayes of flourishing youth. The accomplishing of this, is the sincere and holy aime of your much obliged Nephew, in this his first offering to publike view. Which simple aime, that the Lord may graciously answer to your Ladyships comfort

here, and eternall happineſſe hereafter, I ſhall ſtill continue my prayer (though here I end my Epiſtle) that the Lord will ſtill attend this my poore endevour with his rich bleſſing, to all the partakers thereof, and in ſpeciall to you.

Your much obliged Nephew,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

Christian Reader.

COmmunion with Christ, is our happineſſe in this world, and in the world to come: that which makes every ſweet thing ſweet, and every ſweet thing ſweeter. With this ſweet ſubject is this little Tract now come to thy hand taken up. Poore fallen man is ſtill complaining of one want or other; and when the thing is given which hee longed for, yet his ſoule is as farre from content, as before; like to a childe that cryes for this and that, and yet when hee hath what he cryed for, continues crying ſtill, and cannot tell wel what he would have. All our want is this, the want of Communion with Christ: this is the cauſe of all complaints; the infelici-

tie of the ſoul, the ſum of mans miſery, here and hereafter; but poor blind man ſees it not, and therefore complaines of twentie things, twentie miles a this ſide his diſeaſe; and ſo ſpends his dayes in labour and ſorrow, and yet loſes happineſſe, both here and hereafter too. A full fruition of Chriſt, is full felicitie: a full fruition of any thing below Chriſt, without Chriſt, is but vanitie and vexation of ſpirit. The more then, O fallen man, thou canſt get into communion with thy God, the more will thy great loſſe be repaired, thy complaining ſoule ſatisfied, and thy tranquilitie ſettled upon thee againe. Hunt not then after riches, honours, pleaſures, and ſuch like low delights of the ſonnes of men, with this deluded miſtaken world, which lies in wickedneſſe; for felicitie is not in theſe: but ſtudy and and ſtrive after a nearer communion with Chriſt: the next way to get moſt

in

in with him, is the ſpeedie way unto all happineſſe: ſo much as thou canſt get of his company, ſo much art thou in heaven. *How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the ſumme of them? If I ſhould count them, they are more in number then the ſand: when I awake I am ſtill with thee.* Pſal. 134. 17, 18.

This is heaven upon earth; and that true Nobilitie and Honour, which wee ſhould bee all ambitious after; to loſe our ſpirits in God. What an unſpeakable felicitie is it, to be ſtill with God in our thoughts? This ennobles the ſpirit of man, and makes it a companion to the King of Kings: this gives evenneſſe and ſteadineſſe to a mans courſe; and makes him walk in all the wayes of God blameleſſe: this gives tranſcendant peace and tranquilitie to a mans ſpirit, and makes him unmoveable in the midſt of feares: this gives bread

in

in ſamine; drinke, in drought, peace in warre; health in ſickneſſe; life in death. Devote thy ſelfe therefore to Chriſt, that hee may devote himſelfe to thee: and as a poore *medium* of communion, make uſe (if thou pleaſe) of this enſuing Treatiſe. If thou get any good, give glorie to God; and make the poore Pen-man, a conſtant ſharer in thy prayers.

Thine in Chriſt,

Theophilus Philanthropus.

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FINIS.

CHRISTS COMMVNION With His Church Militant.

IOHN 14. vers. 18.

I will not leave you comfortlesse; I will come to you.

CHRIST and his Church are deare each to other: the truth of this is at large manifest in this Chapter. Christ as a heavenly Husband, being to leave his earthly Spouse; to wit, his Church Militant, and to live with his Father at his right hand in glorie, with his Church Triumphant; endevoureth with various verses of this chapter, to comfort the sad spirit of his Beloved Spouse, which he perceived was much dejected. The verse which I

have chosen to insist on, is one of them: *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.* In more words let me repeat this verse againe. *Thou, O my Love, my Dove, my faire One, art sad I see, and disconsolate at my departure! As a Lilly in the valley; nay, as a Lily (indeed) among thorns I shall leave thee: the Prince of darknesse dwelling in the children of darknesse, will endevour to devoure thee; Sons of Belial will beset thee, persecute and torment thee, as they have done me before thee: but be not at this dismayed, O fairest of women! dejected, as one without all consolation: for I will not leave thee comfortlesse, I will come to thee.*

What difference is there between a prison-house and mine owne house, if sweet friends continually come to me there? 'Tis a prison and no better wee abide in, whilst wee dwell in the body: fetter'd wee are with many lusts, and grone wee do, under the tyranny and oppression of a body of death; and O! wretched men that we are, dwelling in these dungeons of clay, if no friend from Heaven come to us? 'Tis true, O my Spouse, what thou sayest; and therefore that thy dwelling in the body may not be comfortlesse, I will come to thee. *I will*

not

not leave thee comfortlesse, I will come, &c.

The body is a prison to the Ioule, and the world is a hell to both. The God of this world is a Devill, and the children of this world Devils, to the Spouse of Christ. The father torments her spirit; and the children torment her flesh: neither in body nor soul, whilest in this world, can the Spouse of Christ be quiet. Wee that are thus in hell upon earth, shall quickly be comfortlesse, if no friend from Heaven come to us. True, oh my Spouse: but to prevent this, *I will come to thee.* From Heaven to Earth (indeed) is a long journey; but yet this I'le not stand on; rather than thou shalt be left comfortlesse, in any condition upon earth, I will from Heaven come to thee. Let it be what weather 'twill, at what time 'twill, and be at mid-night thou need'st me, I will come to thee; *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

Affliction hath made many friends upon earth forsake me, O my Saviour! wilt not thou my heavenly friend so serve me? What if the Devill cast me into prison? wilt thou come to me there? wilt thou visit me when I lye in a nasty roome, amongst nasty wretches, that curse and sweare, which thou

canst not endure to heare? Yea, ô faireſt of women! rather than thou ſhalt be comfortleſſe in ſuch a condition; *I will come to thee.*

Thou wilt come to mee, ô my Saviour, one day; but what if the Devill keep mee in ſuch a priſon *ten dayes?* a long time? till the *iron enter into my ſoule?* wilt thou not wex wearie at laſt, and leave comming to me? No my Love, I am reſolved to the contrarie. [*I will not*] *leave thee comfortleſſe* [*I will*] *come to thee.*

Why, but what if Satan winnow me as wheat, and caſt me into ſin, which is more odious to thee than any priſon, than any place, or any thing: wilt thou not then ſhake mee off for ever, and never come to me more? This, ô faireſt of women! may make mee ceaſe comming to thee *for a moment*; but no longer: for I am reſolved not to [*leave*] *thee comfortleſſe* in any condition, either of ſin or puniſhment. *I will not* [*leave*] *thee comfortleſſe*, [*I will*] *come to thee.*

My Text, you ſee, is Chriſts conjugall promiſe to his Spouſe, of all kindneſſe, during the time of his perſonall abſence. The matter of this promiſe is conſolatorie; the forme according to which our Saviour expreſſeth this conſolatorie language; is firſt negative,

negative; *I will not leave you comfortlesse.* Secondly, affirmative; *I will come to you.* These latter words containe the reason of what is delivered in the former. Wee cannot be comfortlesse; [*because*] Christ still comes to us. And thus taking the words; you may read them thus, *viz. I will not leave you comfortlesse,* [for] *I will come to you.* No condition can be comfortlesse, if Christ come to us.

I will not leave you comfortlesse,] Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς, *I will not leave you fatherlesse and motherlesse. I will not leave you Orphans,* saith the Originall, Ἀπορφανιζομαι, the word comes from, that is here translated *comfortlesse,* which signifies, to be made fatherlesse and motherlesse; which because it is usually a condition verie comfortlesse, therefore is the word thus rendred, ὀρφανούς, *comfortlesse.* Thus the children of Christ shall not be left. They are no *Orphans,* which have Christ for their Father. They are never totally bereft of all comfort, to whom Christ comes: and thus he will still doe to his Church Militant. Christ will never leave comming from Heaven to earth, although it be a very long journey, as long as hee hath any one child upon earth. *I will not leave you comfortlesse.*

I will come to you,] ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, I returne to you, saith the Originall; spoken in the Present Tense, and not in the Future, [*I will returne to you*, as we have it translated. *Ac si diceret Christus* (saith one) *scilicet nondum profectum, jam esse in reditu*; As if Christ had said, although I am not yet gone from you, yet am I returning to you. Christ though not actually in person departed, yet was ready in spirit to be present with his Spouse to the end of the world.

Thus having paraphrastically gone over these words, I will put the plaine meaning of them into this *Thesis* in Divinitie, *That the Church of Christ Militant shall not be left comfortlesse, because Christ will come to her.* Or thus, *no child of Christ upon earth, shall be left comfortlesse, for Christ will come to him.* What Christ spake at his departure to his Disciples, was not for them only, but for the comfort of all his people to the end of the world. In his Disciples he spake thus to all his children, that are or ever shall be upon the face of the earth, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

Divin. This comfortable doctrine, that I may fully and methodically handle, I will lay open unto you these foure things: First, that Christ

Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Secondly, how Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Thirdly, when Christ doth come to his children upon earth. Lastly, why Christ will take so much paines, as to come to his children on earth? I begin with the first of these, to wit, that Christ doth come to his Church and children upon earth. The truth of this is evident by our Saviours owne language, and by each godly mans experience.

Our Saviour, not only in my Text, but in many other places promised to come to his Church Militant, and therefore surely hee doth come to his people on earth: for Christ is God, *and God cannot lye, nor repent.* What Christ hath said hee will do, that hee will faithfully performe to a tittle: *for faithfull is hee that hath promised,* saith the Apostle. *Go therefore and teach all nations, &c. teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alwayes, even to the end of the world, Amen.* Matth. 28. 19, 20. This place sheweth plainly, that Christ doth come to his children upon earth; and that he will do this to the end of the world. For Ministers (or all men) to walk faithfully in their places,

teaching their flock to *observe* [*all*] *things, that Christ hath given them in charge*; will cost them hot water: especially living in corrupt places. This our Saviour tenderly considered: and therefore that his Disciples might not be disheartened; hee assures them of his company unto the last, to support and comfort them. *Lo I am with you to the end of the world.* Christ by this phrase of speech doth hint us, that what he then spake, should reach further than unto those to whom then hee appeared: namely, to all Ministers and people *to the end of the world*, that shall faithfully discharge their places and callings to his honour.

I might here tell you, that not onely Christs word; but also Christs name sets forth the truth of this, that Christ is with his Church Militant, and so consequently, that he doth come to her. He was called *Emanuel*, which being interpreted, *is God with us*. Mat. 1.23. Which name was not only to note Christ; as then corporally present with his Church: but to note Christ as one having actually assumed our nature, and so to bee more gloriously present with his Church to the end of the world, than ever from the beginning after *Adams* fall. Now as shee said

ſaid of her husband, *as his name is, ſo is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him:* ſo may the Spouſe ſpeake of her Husband Chriſt; as his name is, ſo is he. *Emanuel* is his name, with ſignifies *God with us*, and ſo indeed is Chriſt. He is continually with us. What *David* ſaid of himſelfe, in reſpect of Chriſt; that may wee truly ſay of Chriſt, in reſpect of us. *Nevertheleſſe* (ſaith he) *I am continually with thee; thou haſt holden me by my right hand.* Though Chriſt dwell in Heaven, and we on earth; yet nevertheleſſe hee is continually comming to us, and abiding with us.

The godly have, and do find the truth of this by bleſſed experience, which is the ſecond thing; and that which I rather inſiſt on, for the confirmation of the truth in hand: becauſe againſt experience there is no diſputation. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Chriſt comes to his children upon earth, that their condition may not bee comfortleſſe. *Herod* caſt *Peter* into priſon, and thought to have made him comfortleſſe; but Chriſt came to him, as you may ſee. *And behold* (ſaith the Text) *the Angell of the* LORD *came upon him, and a Light ſhined in the priſon; and*

he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly, and his chaines fell off from his hand. The Jewes by a storme of stones thought to have made *Steven* comfortlesse, but Christs comming to him prevented it. Christ so gloriously came to him in that deadly storme, that hee found more comfort (I beleeve) than ever he did before in his life: for *hee looked up stedfastly into Heaven, and saw the glorie of God, and Iesus standing at the right hand of God*: hee saw the Heavens opened ready to receive him, which transcendently revived him: which glorious vision he could never have seen, had not Christ come to him. *Paul* likewise found the truth of this point, when hee had left *Athens*, and came to preach to the *Gentiles* at *Corinth*. He was verie fearfull, what successe hee should find in his Ministerie, amongst the barbarous *Gentiles*. Now our tender Saviour, that *Paul* might not be overborne with feare, and made heartlesse and comfortlesse, graciously comes to him in a vision, as you may read. *Then spake the Lord to Paul by night in a vision, Be not afraid, but speake, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee; and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this Citie.* Thus

at

at another time Christ came to *Paul*, that he might not be left comfortlesse, when hee was pleading his cause before *Ananias*, and like to be pull'd in peeces. *And the night following* (saith the Text) *the Lord stood by him, and said; be of good cheere Paul, for as thou hast testified of me in Ierusalem, so must thou also beare witnesse at Rome.* At another time, Act. 23. 11. *Paul* & *Silas* together had experience of this truth, that Christ comes to his Church Militant. As they were powring out their soules together in prayer, Christ wonderfully came to them: he came in an Earthquake, and made the *foundations of the prison shake*, and so *opened all the prison doors, and loosed every prisoners bonds*. Comfortable was Christs comming to *Paul* and *Silas*, but terrible to the Gaoler; for hee seeing in what manner Christ broke in and rescued his servant, would have killed himselfe; but Christ came graciously to his soule also, and rescued it out of the hands of the Devill. Happie was it for this man, that Christ did finish two works in one journey; to wit, come to *Paul* and *Silas*, and deliver their bodies out of prison, and withall come to their Gaoler, and deliver his soule out of prison too. In an Earthquake Christ came both to Prisoners and Gaoler: for the Gao-

ler came *trembling* to the Prisoners of hope, as a man in despaire; *and fell downe*, saith the Text, *before Paul and Silas*. 'Tis no matter how Christ come to us; so hee comfort us before he leave us. Thus I have shewed to you, that CHRIST doth come to his Church Militant.

The second thing that I am to shew you, for the opening of the point; is, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant. To this I will answer, First, more generally, and briefly: Secondly, more particularly and fully. More generally and briefly, I answer thus: Christ visits his Church Militant; as *David* visited and comforted *Hanun*, to wit, mediately by his spirit, as *David* did mediately by his servants. *And I will pray the Father, and hee shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the* [*Spirit of truth,*] *&c.* Ioh. 14. 16, 17. *Peter* found the truth of this, that Christ by his Spirit comes now to his Church Militant. *While Peter thought on the vision,* [*the Spirit*] *said unto him, behold three men seek thee.*

But in the second place, that I may more particularly and fully answer to this question; to wit, how Christ doth come to his Church Militant, to comfort her in all conditions; I will lay before you the generall

conditions of mankinde: and ſhew you how Chriſt by his Spirit, as a Comforter, comes to us in them. The generall conditions of mankinde are two, *proſperitie* and *adverſitie*.

Proſperitie would ſoone bring the ſoules of Gods people to a comfortleſſe condition, did not Chriſt by his Spirit come to them. Satan, that evill ſpirit is ſo buſie, comming to the children of God, when in proſperitie, that did not Chriſt alſo come to them by his Almightie Spirit, to quench all his fierie darts; their ſoules would ſoon be comfortleſſe, the Lord knowes. When *Peter* was warme in the High Prieſts Hall, then then the devill by a damſell came to him, and ſo farre hee prevail'd on him; that had not Chriſt lookt back upon him, and by his Spirit come to him; he had beene in a comfortleſſe condition indeed. And thus would the condition of good men now be, which are warme in their neſts with outward things, did not Chriſt come to them: when the ſons of God be honourable, and great amongſt the ſonnes of men, as *David* and *Solomon*, *Iob*, *Iacob*, and *Abraham* were; then the devill in point of policie, though not out of love, viſits them often; and by often comming to them then; drawes their precious

ſoules

soules into many sinnes, as pride, ambition, malice, sensualitie, and the like; which like Cankers, quickly fret and eat out all divine consolation in the soule, and leave it like the Prodigall feeding upon huskes; solacing it selfe with no other joy and content, then what the bare creature dipt in sinne will afford the sense; which, you must needs say, is of all comfortlesse conditions the most and worst comfortlesse. Now that these may not be left in this comfortlesse state, to perish eternally, Christ by his Spirit thus comes to them. First in a sweet still voice behinde them, as the Prophet speaks, saying, sometimes in the midst of their sensualitie; this is not the way to eternall joy: no, this is the way, O sensuall soule, walke in it.

This still voice strikes a damp in the merrie sensuall soule of a Christian, and makes his heart in the midst of vaine laughter, sad. If this be not prevalent enough to turn him, but on againe he will in his sinfull way; then Christ comes with a witnesse, in thundring and lightning, to convince and sting the conscience, as hee did to the Israelites, to bring them to see their wickednesse in chusing a King, vntill God thunder'd and lightn'd from heaven fearefully, they laid not

to

to heart their rejecting God as their King, but went on ſtrongly and unaffectedly in their way. And juſt thus oft times it is, with many of the ſonnes of God in proſperitie: the ſtill voice of Chriſt ſweetly ſuggeſting, and mildely checking for ſinne, is not ſtrong enough to ſtop and turne them; untill the Angel of the Covenant come downe into the conſcience, and ſtand with a flaming Sword, threatning nothing but Hell and Death, if they make on a ſtep further, they ſtop nor turne not; which though not Chriſts naturall carriage to his children, yet he will in tender love deny himſelfe thus farre, as to put on an affrighting Vizzard upon his ſmiling countenance, and come terribly, and ſave violently, by plucking his children out of the fire, rather then hee will leave any of his ſo comfortleſſe, as to periſh remedileſſe. Chriſt will ſpeak out and ſpeak plaine, as hee did to *David* by *Nathan*, when a ſtill voice, and ſecret ſilent hints and becks will not do; Hee will come and lay his mouth to a mans eare and cry aloud, when he perceives that the pleaſure or profit of ſinne hath made him very deafe: hee will never leave crying and calling, ſtriking and knocking, till he hath made the deafe ſoule heare, and humble himſelfe

himselfe with *Peter* and *David*, and then he puls off the terrible Vizzard from his countenance, and lookes upon the mourning penitent, with a countenance like *Lebanon*, and his lips drop sweet smelling myrrh, into his broken spirit: and so is not left comfortlesse, according to Christs promise, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

But suppose Satan should not be busie, coming to the sonnes of God in prosperitie; yet would worldly prosperity be a comfortlesse condition, should not Christ by his Spirit come to them. Riches and honours, together with all other delights of the sonnes of men; they are as the white of an Egge, things without savour, unlesse Christ come along with them to us: they tire and wearie, pricke, distract and vex a man: they rob him of his sleepe, and many times of his wits, nay of his precious life: they drowne mens soules in pride, voluptuousnesse, securitie, and so set them in the next way to hell. This snare waits at every ungodly mans table, which makes prosperitie to him comfortlesse. This snare, that it may not catch the godly; Christ comes to them by his Spirit, and sanctifies prosperitie by them: *Hee teaches them how to abound*; that is, how so to use

uſe the creature, as to enjoy ſervice and comfort from it: and to bring honour and glory by it.

The creature is emptie of what it promiſeth; and entiſing with what it hath: and this makes proſperitie to every carnall man, a comfortleſſe condition. Now to take off both theſe; Chriſt comes to his children which enjoy the creature, plenteouſly: hee comes in the creature, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it: that is, by his bleſſing he makes it ſatisfiable and contentfull to the enjoyer, which it is not of it ſelfe: this is the peculiar gaine that attends the godly: Chriſt comes in the creature to them, and ſo cures the emptineſſe of it, and puts ſuch a ſupernaturall vertue and ſweetneſſe in it; that *they are there with contented.* And as Chriſt comes [*in*] the creature to cure the emptineſſe of it, ſo he comes [*with*] the creature, to cure the entiſing of it. Hee doth by the creature leade the ſoules of his children to the Creatour: by the ſweet of the one, he lifts up their ſoules to heaven, to admire the ſweetneſſe of the other: ſo that, that which others are entiſed and beſotted with, and reſt in, that they take wing from to flee to heaven, whence comes every good and perfect gift,

which

which is that indeed that makes prosperitie a comfortable condition; which otherwise is comfortlesse enough, the Lord knowes.

Secondly, adversitie would be a comfortlesse condition to the godly, if Christ by his Spirit did not come to them: This I suppose none will deny; *For no affliction in it selfe is comfortable or joyfull*, but comfortlesse; if Christ by his Spirit do not come to us. Corporall affliction is a comfortlesse condition, unlesse Christ come to us, and be our Physitian. Spirituall affliction is a more comfortlesse condition, if Christ do not come to us.

Here these two questions are necessary to be answered: First, how doth Christ come to us in corporall affliction? Secondly, how doth Christ come to us in Spirituall affliction?

To these questions both together, I thus answer: Christ the Physitian of soule and bodie, comes to both with comfort in one way; and that is by helping the soule to apply the promises of God, which are sutable to his distresse. If a childe of God bee sad and sorrowfull, because of corporall affliction, Christ comes to him by his Spirit, with this comfortable language, *I am all-sufficient*. Christ by his Spirit, spreads abroad this

Cardinall

Cardinall promiſe before the ſad ſoule, and ſhewes him what a depth of mercy is folded up in it. There is a ſufficiencie of wiſedome in me, to finde out wayes and meanes to deliver thee, though never ſo low brought. There is likewiſe a ſufficiencie of power, to proſecute right meanes to accompliſh their right end. Nay, there is a ſufficiency in mee, to worke about good for thee, O ſad ſoule, without meanes.

There's a ſufficiencie of affection and will, to declare power and wiſedome, with every attribute elſe, for thy good. If for all this application and amplification of a generall promiſe, the ſoule ſtill droope under ſome corporall calamitie; Chriſt doth then in ſuch a ſoule, as *Iacobs* ſons and daughters did for him, *They roſe up* (ſaith the Text) *and comforted him*: Gen. 37. 35. So Chriſt by his Spirit, after a lively manner indeed, riſes up in ſuch a ſoule to comfort him: and now he leades this mourning Chriſtian to ſome particular promiſe; that is, ſuch a promiſe as ſpeakes not of deliverance in generall, but of deliverance in particular, out of this or that kind of diſtreſſe, which hee groanes under. As to give you an inſtance; ſuppoſe a Chriſtian be ſad and take thought,

as

as Christ saith, *What he shall eat, and what hee shall drinke, and wherewithall hee shall be cloathed:* then the Comforter comes with this particular promise, which speakes of deliverance out of this particular distresse. *First, seeke the kingdome of God and his righteousnesse; and all these things shall be added unto you: take therefore no thought for to morrow, for to morrow shall take thought for the things of it selfe.* Mat. 6. 33, 34. If yet for all this, the spirit of a Christian still complain, as one fearing he shall want daily bread for him and his; then the Comforter comes, and perswades the soul to rest quietly upon the promise of God. He speakes now to the complaining Christian, as the Levites father in law did to him, *Comfort thy selfe, I pray thee, with a morsell of bread.* Iudges 19. Comfort thy selfe, O mourning soul! I pray thee, with this particular promise, which is but a morsell of that bread, which came downe from heaven, one of the least favours that Christ hath procured for thee, to wit, a right and interest in the creature: with this perswasive language, doth Christ follow the complaining soule, untill he hath perswaded him, to owne his owne mercy? and so he keepes his children in povertie, from being comfortlesse.

As

As Christ in corporall afflictions comes to his children, and keepes them from being comfortlesse; so likewise he comes to them in spirituall afflictions, that they may not be left comfortlesse. If a childe of God be sad and sorrowfull, because of this or that strong temptation; the Comforter then comes to him with this sweet language: *My grace is sufficient for thee.* Thou prayest, and Satan tempts thee; thou doest fast and pray, and yet Satan and thy lusts are more violent upon thee; thou doest all this with bitter teares, and Satan is the more bitterly bent against thee; and thou art foil'd every moment. By this, O winnowed soule! Christ would shew thee, that thou wilt be comfortlesse, in the midst of all thy sore soule-labour, unlesse he come to thee. *This same shall comfort us, concerning the worke and toile of our hands,* said *Lamech* of *Noah:* so may we say of Christ; this same must comfort us, concerning the labour and toile of our soules with any temptation: or else wee shall be comfortlesse, though wee labour never so much. And this Christ doth and will doe, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of Satans

Satans prevailing upon him by temptation; that we may not be comfortlesse in this condition, Christ by his Spirit comes to him, and shews him the fountaine of his blood, how deep it is, and how free it is. How deep it is, that it will drown all sinne, Sinnes after conversion, as well as before: sinnes often repeated, as well as sinnes onely committed. And then he shews the wounded soule, how free this fountaine is, for *any that hunger and thirst for it, for any that are weary and heavie laden*, 1. John 1. 7. and desire to bee eased by it; and so by degrees draws the wounded soule, to wash his wounds in it by faith, and so Christ heales and comforts him. As the brethren of *Ephraim* comforted him, when hee mourned because the men of *Gath* had slaine his son. 1 *Chro.* 7. 22. So Christ comes to us, and comforts us, when the devill by his temptations hath almost slaine our souls, he like the good Samaritan, powres in oile and wine into our wounds, and cures us. Though Satan passe by, and his sinnes passe by, and leave us comfortlesse in the day of wounds and bleeding, yet Christ cannot, so full of bowels is hee, nor will not, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, &c.*

If a Christian lie languishing, because of often

often and frequent relapſes, after promiſes and purpoſes to do better; If this Chriſtian in the anguiſh of his ſpirit ſpeak to every godly friend, as the Prophet did to his, *Therefore ſaid I, looke away from mee, I will weep bitterly, labour not to comfort me, becauſe of the ſpoiling of the daughter of my people*; Iſai 22 4. Looke away from mee, O ye my Chriſtian friends! yea, and you, my faithfull Miniſter; for I will weepe bitterly, labour not to comfort mee, becauſe of the ſpoiling of my ſoule, by ſo often ſinning, againſt vowes and promiſes, favours and bleſſings: Chriſt comes to this ſoule, and will not leave him comfortleſſe in this condition, (though it be indeed a very deſperate condition) The Comforter uſually takes this courſe, with this comfortleſſe ſoule, to powre in ſome oyle into his deepe wounds: he reaſoneth with him from the mercie of man, to the mercie of God; from a drop, to the Ocean; and it may be, faſtens upon his own language once delivered to *Peter*: *Peter came to our Saviour and ſaid, Lord, how oft ſhall my brother ſinne againſt me, and I forgive him? till ſeven times? Ieſus ſaith unto him, I ſay not unto thee untill ſeven times, but untill ſeventy times ſeven.* Matthew 18. 21, 22.

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From this speech, the Comforter thus reasoneth, with this sad and sore wounded soule, *viz.* If Christ would have *Peter*; a sinfull man: shew so much mercy to one, so often offending him; surely Christ, a holy God, and infinite in love, is ready to shew much more compassion Himselfe, to those that are penitent, though they have sinned times without number against him. Thus the Comforter leades this desperate Christian, as a weak wounded man by the hand; from the mercy of man, to the mercy of God: and enables him this way, after some space of time, to take in comfort: for Christ is resolved, he will not leave this Christian comfortlesse. Christ will never leave comming to this comfortlesse soule, with this speech of his to *Peter*, and others of like nature (as Christ is well furnisht for a comforter) untill he hath brought him to drink willingly (for Christ forceth no Physick upon any Patient) of the cup of consolation more or lesse; and the longer sick-soules turne away their heads from this cup; the more (many times) he perswades them to drink at last.

If Christ *tentandi gratia*, for trialls sake, hide himselfe from a Christian, and so set him a mourning; I shall shew you by and by, how

how he comes to him. This is a condition (though of all deſerted conditions, the beſt) which will make a Chriſtian heart comfortles indeed. *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled.* Pſal. 30.7. Gods hiding his face, though but for trials ſake; will ſo trouble a Chriſtian, that he will quickly be a burthen to himſelf, *and feare round about*, as 'tis ſaid of *Paſhur.* 'Twil make him weary of the night, and weary of the day; weary of his owne houſe, and weary of Gods houſe; weary of mirth, & account it madnes; weary of riches, honours, yea life it ſelf, and wiſh for death. *O that I might have my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that hee would let his hand looſe and cut me off; then ſhould I yet have comfort:* then ſhould I ſee the face of God, which I long like *Moſes* to ſee; then would he lift up the light of his loving countenance, and cauſe his face to ſhine glorioufly upon mee, whereas now I walke in the valley and ſhadow of death; darke dayes are all that goe over my head; the glorious Sonne of righteouſneſſe ſhines not upon my ſoule, from morning to night. To this ſad ſoule thus bemoaning himſelfe for want of his beloved, Chriſt his well beloved thus

comfortably comes. *There hath no temptation taken hold on thee yet, O mourning soule! but that which is common to man: and be assured of this; that God is faithfull by whom thou art tempted, and will not try thee above that which thou art able: but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that thou mai'st be able to beare it.* 1. Cor. 12. 15. For a moment, O faireſt of Women, I ſaw juſt cauſe to hide my face from thee, to try the truth of thy love to me: but know; that with everlaſting kindneſſe will I have mercy on thee. Thy dulneſſe alſo in my ſervice, and thy low-prizing my company, did ſomething trouble me; but know, *that the mountaines ſhall depart, and the hilles be removed, but my kindneſſe ſhall never depart from thee: for this is as the waters of* Noah *unto me; as I have ſworne that the waters of* Noah *ſhould no more go over the earth; ſo have I ſworne that I will not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. O thou afflicted, and toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy ſtones with faire colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs, and I will make thy windows of Agats, and thy gates of Carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleaſant Saphirs.* Iſai. 45. 8,9. Out of this ſweet language of the Prophet to the naturall branch,

branch; the Comforter will fetch such precious water of life, to reveive his deserted soule: with these kisses of his lips will hee so comfort him; that he shall be constrained to say with *David*; *Thou, which hast shewed me great troubles, hast quickned me again, and hast brought me up again from the depths of the earth; thou hast increased my joy, and comforted me on every side.* Psal. 71. 6. I could hitherto, O my God! see thy back-parts; some sad attributes of power and justice, which did terrifie my soule to looke on; but lo, now I see thy glory, thou hast caused it gloriously to passe by mee: nay, to shine upon mee: I see thy face like Lebanon, comely as the Cedars; and herewith is my longing soule satisfied, as with marrow and fatnesse. *This is my comfort, in mine affliction; for thy Spirit, O Christ! by thy word hath revived me.* So that this Soul; though very sorrowfull; yet is not left comfortlesse neither. Thus I have answered the second *Quære*, to wit, how Christ comes to us.

The third thing that I am to shew you; is, When Christ comes to us. *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.* But when, O my Saviour, wilt thou come to us? To this I answer first more generally; then more

particularly and determinately. More generally and briefly, I answer thus, Christ is already come, and is present with his Church Militant, and will be to the end of the world, as hath been already proved. *I am come into my garden, my Sister, my Spouse, I have gathered my Myrrh with my Spice; I have eaten my honey combe with my honey: I have drunke my wine with my milk.* Cant. 5. 1. Christ we see by this sweet language, is come, and is with us already. *I am come, &c.*

But when will he come to mee in particular, as a Comforter? This is the question. To this I answer first negatively, then positively. Negatively I answer thus: *viz.* Christ doth not come to us in this valley of teares, as *Aaron* was commanded to come into the holy place: *Let him not come at all times*, saith the Lord, *lest he die.* Levit. 16.2. If Chirst should not come to us at all times of our distresse; wee should die under our burthen, so comfortlesse would be our condition. When my body is afflicted, I shall be comfortlesse, If Christ doe not come to me. When my soule is afflicted, I shall be more comfortlesse, if Christ doe not graciously come me. When my head akes, teeth akes, back akes, or belly akes: yea, when my least finger,

finger, or joynt in my body akes, I ſhall be comfortleſſe, unleſſe Chriſt come to mee, ſo dolorous and comfortleſſe a Creature is man.

Wherefore as a poſitive anſwer, to the queſtion ere-while propoſed, know, that Chriſt comes to his Church Militant, at all times: as long a his people live in this valley of teares, and are in any diſtreſſe of ſoule or body. Hee comes to them in proſperitie, to ſweeten that, or elſe there would be but a little comfort and ſweetneſſe in it: but hee comes to them in all adverſitie, after a more ſpeciall manner to ſweeten that, being of it ſelfe very bitter; bitterneſſe in the abſtract: my meaning is, altogether bitter, without the leaſt ſweetneſſe or pleaſure in it, to ſoule or body: for no affliction is in the leaſt manner or meaſure joyous, but as Chriſt, by his kind comming to us then, makes it ſo.

But here I ſhall bee thus queſtioned: *viz.* if Chriſt as a Comforter comes to his Church Militant, in every diſtreſſe of ſoule and body; how is it that many of Gods children, in corporall and ſpirituall afflictions, utter comfortleſſe and hopeleſſe language, as thoſe that finde no Comforter come to them? *Is thy mercy cleane gone, and haſt*

thou forgotten to be gracious? (saith *David*) *hast thou shut up thy loving kindnesse in displeasure? and wilt thou be no more intreated? &c.* Many such like sad and dolorous complaints are still uttered by some of Gods deare children: now if Christ as a Comforter, come to His in every distresse; why is it thus with these?

To this I will give answer first more indirectly thus. Possibly that soule which thus complaines; cannot but confesse, that Christ hath come and tendr'd comfort to him; though he through anguish and unbeleife refus'd it. Now if our soule-Physition come from heaven to us, and bring cordials for us, and wee will not take them, but cast them behinde our backes; shall our Physitian bee blamed for unfaithfulnesse and negligence towards his Patients, as one that did not visit them?

Againe, possibly too, this Soule which thus complaines, must confesse that Christ came to him, at the very beginning of his untractablenes towards God, and told him that this would quickly bring him into a comfortlesse condition, if not timely lookt unto; and bid him againe, and againe, by a sweet still voice behinde him, to bee more pliable

to

to God, as he tendred his favour, and his owne comfort. Chriſt came to his Spouſe, ſaying, *Open to me my Siſter, my Love, my Dove, my faire one, for my head is filled with dew, and my lockes with the drops of the night.* But though Chriſt thus kindely came to his Spouſe, yet ſhee unkindly put him off; and upon the matter no better then ſlighted him. *I have put off my coat, how ſhall I put it on? I have waſhed my feet, how ſhall I defile them? &c.* Becauſe of this vntractable carriage, Chriſt departed from his Spouſe, and then ſhee made many complaints: *I opened to my Beloved, but hee had withdrawne himſelf and was gone.* The Spouſe could not now truely ſay; that Chriſt had not come to her; but ſhee might truely ſay, that hee did come to her, but ſhe ſlighted him, and therefore he was forc'd to leave her. Thus 'tis with many now. They mourne like *Rachel* in their miſery, and are not comforted, becauſe none from heaven comes to them: ſuch as theſe, cannot challenge Chriſt, for not making good his promiſe, to come to them, if formerly he have come to them, and they have ſlighted him. If my Phyſitian, obſerving my intemperancy in this or that, come to mee and tell mee, unleſſe you refraine ſuch and

ſuch things, you will certainely fall into ſuch and ſuch diſeaſes, which are very dangerous; if I ſlight him in this, and afterward fall into thoſe diſeaſes, and lye groaning under them, I cannot blame my Phyſitian, for not comming to me, but blame my ſelfe that did ſo ſlight him. So 'tis betweene Chriſt and many a mourning ſoule; Chriſt hath come to them and told them, that if they go on in their ſinfull courſe, and that, that it will rob them quite of their heavenly comforts; but he in this friendly way hath beene ſo farre taken with the ſweetneſſe of ſomething below Chriſt, and ſo at laſt hath found the evill of his owne way, according to Chriſts predicton, and yet complaines of Chriſt not comming to him; but how juſtly judge you.

Againe, as this ſoule poſſibly cannot juſtly complaine, that Chriſt hath not come to him: ſo poſſibly he cannot juſtly complaine, that Chriſt is not come to him. That ſoule which complains after Chriſt, cannot truely ſay, that Chriſt is not come to him: for wee never truely deſire to come to Chriſt, or that Chriſt ſhould come to us, unleſſe hee were already with us, and we with him. Chriſt, I conclude then, is come to this complaining ſoule,

ſoule, though not in that manner and meaſure as he deſires him. The thought of what I long for, if I have leaſt hope of attaining it; is a degree of conſolation.

Finally and more directly, I anſwer to this complaining ſoule thus, Chriſt as a ſenſible and ſatisfactory Comforter, comes to us at his time, and not at ours. Now Chriſts time to comfort mourners will make him moſt welcome; and that is uſually when the ſoule is brought to the greateſt extremity, that it is capable of, and not utterly miſcarry. When *Peter* was ready to ſinke on the Sea, and cryed out, *Maſter, ſave me or I periſh*, then Chriſt came to him, and caught him by the hand: thus doth Chriſt uſually come with ſenſible and ſatisfactory conſolations, when poore ſoules are almoſt quite ſpent with temptations, and ſoule anguiſh, and looke every houre when they ſhall die and drop into hell. *Hee ſhall come to us, as the latter and former raine unto the earth*, ſaith the Prophet. That is, at the ſeaſonableſt time, when the ſoule will make him moſt welcome; and that is, when burnt & ſcorcht with Satans fierie darts, as the earth with the heat of the ſunne; when parcht and chapt, gaping for ſome heavenly ſhowers: then

Christs visits will bee kindnesse indeed: and Christs consolations, sweet indeed. This still remember, O mourning soul! that Christ keeps his word, if he doe not *leave us comfortlesse*: and this be assured he will not doe, *I will not leave you comfortlesse, I will come to you.*

But why wilt thou come to mee, O my Saviour? To this I answer, first thus; *viz.* Christ will come to his Church Militant to bee a Comforter to fulfill his Fathers will. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*, saith Christ, *because the Lord hath anointed me, to preach good tidings to the meeke: He hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaime libertie to the Captive, and the opening of prison to them that are bound, to proclaime the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourne; &c.* By this Text we see; that Christ is anointed for this end: To come to us and bee our Comforter, whilest we live here below mourning in *Sion*. What is said of the three friends of *Iob*, that may I say of the blessed Trinity. *They made an appointment together, to come to comfort him.* So the blessed Trinitie, have made an appointment together to us by Christ; and in all distresses, sweetly to comfort us.

Secondly,

Secondly, Christ will come as a Comforter to his Church Militant, becauſe hee hath promiſed it. As Christ promiſed this in my Text; ſo in many other Texts. *And if I goe away, I will prepare a place for you, and will come againe: and I will pray the Father, and he ſhall give you another Comforter, that may abide with you for ever.* By theſe promiſes Christ hath obliged himſelfe, to come as a Comforter to us: let therefore our deſervings of comfort be what they will; Christ will come to us, becauſe hee hath promiſed he will. Christ ſtands much upon his word: Christ is God, and *God cannot lie. Though wee beleeve not, yet hee abideth faithfull, and cannot deny himſelfe.* A Chriſtian is ready to ſay to Christ as *Iephtha* to the Elders of *Gilead: Did not ye hate me, and expell mee out of my Fathers houſe? and why are yee come to me now, when ye are in diſtreſſe?* ſaid *Iephtha.* So ſaith a Chriſtian, did not I hate thee O my Saviour, and did not I doe what in mee lay to expell thee from my ſoule, by my ſinning againe and againe againſt thy Spirit? And why art thou come to mee now, to comfort me in my diſtreſſe? Why, this that was foreſaid, may ſuffice, O ſinfull ſoul, as an anſwere. Chriſt looks not at what thou haſt

done, but at what he hath promiſed; and his word he will keepe, though wee change as the heavens: heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but not one jot of his word ſhall fall to the ground. *I will not leave you comfortleſſe, I will come to you.*

Theſe I conceive are the principall grounds, why Chriſt comes as a Comforter to his Church Militant: two grounds more may be alledged, as *Cauſæ minus principales*, leſſe principle cauſes; the firſt whereof is This. Chriſt comes to us in our diſtreſſes as a Comforter, that we may not ſtretch out our hands unto iniquity. Man in diſtreſſe is ſo deſirous of eaſe, that if Chriſt doe not come to him and comfort him, he'll goe to Sinne and Satan for eaſe. *Cain* was diſconſolate, and becauſe Chriſt did not come to him as a Comforter; he ran like a vagabond up and downe the world, to finde eaſe in any thing. *Iudas* was diſconſolate, and becauſe Chriſt as Comforter did not come to him, he made a halter his comforter. *Saul* being in diſtreſſe by the *Philiſtines*, becauſe Chriſt did not come to him by Urim, nor by Viſion, nor by Prophets, he went to the devill for comfort. Now that Chriſts children may not thus doe, *Chriſt will not leave*

them

them comfortleſſe, but will come to them.

The ſecond gronnd why Chriſt will come to his Church Militant as a Comforter, is this: That hee may ſtop the mouthes of all ungodly wretches, who ſay of the godly when in great diſtreſſes, *Perſecute and take them, for there is none to deliver them.* A wicked man looking upon a wounded ſoule with a carnall eye, breakes out into ſome ſuch language, as *Achiſh* did concerning *David. Lo you ſee the man is mad.* This man is a diſtracted perſon, fitter for Bedlam, then for Gods houſe: an idle crackt braine fellow, unfit to come into ſolemne aſſemblies. Now that Chriſt may ſilence ſuch blacke mouth'd men as theſe, he graciouſly comes to ſuch wounded ſouls, and heales their broken hearts, and binds up their wounds; hee powres the Spirit of conſolation upon ſuch as went mourning all the day long, and makes them walk with joy and ſtrong conſolation, ſo that ſuch as cenſured them for this and that, are forc'd to lay their hand upon their mouth, and to condemne themſelves as blinde Bats, and not able to diſcern the wayes of God towards his children.

Having thus opened the point in hand, I will in the next place ſhew you how uſefull it

it is, to the wicked and to the godly. Will not Christ leave any of his children upon earth comfortlesse, but still as a Comforter come to them? Then you which live in your sinnes, and so consequently none of Christs children; may collect the unhappinesse of your condition from this point. You shall live and die comfortlesse, for Christ will not come to you as a Comforter; thus he comes onely to his children. Christ will not come to you in prosperitie as a Comforter; and therefore in the midst of sensuall laughter, your hearts will be sad: in the midst of all thy worldly contents, thy spirit will at times gnaw and beat within thee: and never will All thou enjoyest give any complacencie of comfort to thee, because Christ as a Comforter comes not to thee. All outward comforts, without the inward consolations of Christ, they are as good broath unseasoned, which rather cloys then contents the appetite; they weary, distract, and vex, and not revive the owner. Be it, that thou art as wise as *Achitophel*, as eloquent as *Herod*, as learned as *Gamaliel*, as rich as *Nabal*, as honourable as *Haman*, as great in the Church as *Iudas*; why, yet shalt thou live comfortlesse; that is, utterly destitute

tute of Celeſtiall conſolation; one drop whereof hath more ſoule-reviving ſweetneſſe in it, then all the things of this life can afford. Alas! what is learning? what is wit, wealth, honour, or any other worldly thing to comfort me, if Chriſt do not come to me. A man may have all that this world can afford; and yet hang himſelfe for want of comfort, if Chriſt come not to him, as *Achitophel*, *Iudas*, and others have done.

Ob. No men laugh lowder, nor laugh oftner then wicked men in proſperitie: no man merrier in an Alehouſe, Playhouſe, Taverne, Faire, or Market, then they: and are not theſe then the onely comfortable men in the world.

Sol. To this I anſwer firſt thus: Laughter is one thing; and Spirituall Conſolation another thing. Every one that laughs, hath not a cheerfull ſpirit within: for in the midſt of laughter a mans heart may be ſad, ſaith *Solomon*. And ſo on the other hand; every one that hath a comfortable ſpirit, hath not a laughing face: Wee do not read that Chriſt ever laughed, and yet had more comfort in his Spirit, then all the merrie men of this world.

Secondly, I anſwer thus: Some mens ſpirits

rits are so left of God to levitie and vanitie, that they will laugh at the wagging of a straw (as we say.) This is a great judgement of God upon the spirit, and not to be accounted a comfortable and happie condition? *'Tis a pastime to fooles to doe wickedly*, saith *Solomon*. This is not properly called *mirth* (saith he) but *madnesse*. You shall see mad men laugh sometimes exceedingly, and hoop and hallow, as if their spirits were as full of joy as they could hold: what shall we conclude now, that these forlorne creatures are in a comfortable condition? Alas! say wee, if they were but sensible of their condition, they would soon cease laughing, and begin lamenting. And so may I say to you of all that laugh and rejoyce, and yet live in their sinnes, and so consequently have no comforter from heaven come to them, they are mad men: were their eyes open to see their forlorne condition, they would quickly change their note, and turne their mirth into mourning, as *Iames* saith.

Quest. Why, but doth not Christ come to the wicked in prosperitie?

Answ. Yes, no doubt to bee made of it. Christ came to *Belshazzar* whilst he was quaffing in the golden vessels of the temple, and

and wrote downe his wickedneſſe in the wall. And thus he comes to all ungodly perſons in proſperitie, to write downe all their ungodly deeds, that ſo he may exactly judge them at the great day of account.

Queſt. Why, but doth not Chriſt come as a Comforter, to wicked men that are great and wealthy?

Anſw. Chriſt regards no man for his wealth, or for any externall greatneſſe. If a man be never ſo rich, or never ſo honourable, yet if he have not denyed his luſts, and given up himſelfe to Chriſt, to bee ruled by him, Chriſt will never come to comfort him, if he would give him all he hath for his paines; he will not ſtep a foot out of doors to a Prince, if he be wicked.

Ob. Why, but though he will not come to ungodly men as a Comforter in proſperitie, when they can make ſome ſhift without him, yet hee will come to them as a Comforter in adverſitie, when all other comforts faile.

Sol. No he will not. Chriſt will not know thy ſoule in adverſitie, which art a diſobeyer of him. As hee would not let *Dives* have a drop of water to coole his tongue, though in unutterable torments, where many Oceans would

would not in the leaſt meaſure have quench ed the flames; no neither will he afford thee the leaſt drop of conſolation in thy greateſt extremitie; though thou cry Lord, Lord, and cut thy fleſh in the fervencie of thy ſpirit, like *Baals* Prieſts, to prevaile; yet ſhalt thou be ſent emptie away. Nay Chriſt will be ſo farre from being a Comforter to ungodly men when in miſery; that Hee will adde to their outward miſerie, inward miſerie. When thy bodie is in diſtreſſe, Chriſt will awaken thy ſoule, that now lies aſleep, and ſet thy conſcience a gnawing within thee, which will be greater torture then if thou wert rackt in every limbe. Thou maiſt ſend for godly Miniſters and godly friends to comfort thee then, and they poſſibly may deliver very comfortable things, but they ſhall be of no more favour to thy ſoule, then the white of an egge; becauſe Chriſt as a Comforter wil not ſpeak thoſe ſweet things to thy ſoule, which thy friends doe to thy eares. As the Lord bewailes the miſerable condition of *Ieruſalem*; ſo may I bewaile the miſerable condition of all ungodly men. *Theſe two things are come unto thee, who ſhall be ſorry for thee? deſolation and deſtruction; and the famine, and the ſword: by whom ſhall*

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I comfort thee? So ſay I to all ungodly perſons: miſerie upon miſerie will firſt or laſt ſeize upon you, and who then ſhall be ſorrie for you? Famine, and ſword, and peſtilence; ſickneſſe, and death, and judgement; and by whom will you bee comforted? your Honours cannot comfort you: your Riches and Friends cannot comfort you: your father the Devill he will not then comfort you: your Conſcience which you have often ſinned againſt, ſhall not comfort you; but torture you: becauſe Chriſt will not come to you, to ſprinkle it with his blood, and to pacifie it. So that I conclude all; thus: you will live comfortleſſe, die comfortleſſe, and abide in hell after death everlaſtingly comfortleſſe.

'Tis true all that you ſay Sir: man is a comfortleſſe creature indeed, unleſſe Chriſt come to him, I finde it by wofull experience. I have much wealth in my purſe, and yet but little peace in my ſpirit. I ſee the devill (me thinkes) now and then, ſit a ſtride upon the top of my money-bags, waiting for mee, when I come to comfort my ſelfe in the beholding of them: and to what this will come at laſt; I cannot tell. Sinne I am ſure I do; and comfortleſſe becauſe of ſinne, I am:

and

and more comfortleſſe every day I look to be, unleſſe Chriſt come to mee, and yet how to get him to come to me, I know not.

Would'ſt thou, O comfortleſſe creature! have Chriſt to come to thee? Doe then to Chriſt as *Lydia* did to *Paul*, lovingly invite him to come to thee. Make knowne thy comfortleſſe condition to Chriſt, and then earneſtly entreat him to viſit thy poore ſoule. The ground why I exhort thee O ſinner! thus to doe; is, becauſe God hath promiſed, *to give his holy Spirit to them that aske it*, Luke 11. 13. If therefore thou wouldeſt have Chriſt by his Spirit to come to thee; invite him, aske him, begge, and entreat him to come and dwell in thy ſoule; and tell him that he ſhall have every roome in thy heart at command. As *Rebeckahs* brother ſaid to *Abrahams* ſervant; So doe thou ſay to Chriſt; *Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? for I have prepared the houſe, and roome for the Camels, &c.* Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without? here is roome for thee and all thy glorious traine. Here's an underſtanding, will, memory, affections, they ſhall be all at thy uſe and ſervice O Chriſt, wherefore come in thou bleſ-

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ſed of the Lord, and make thy abode with me. Thus continue crying to Chriſt, and longing for him, and by this thou wilt declare thy great love unto him, and ſo make thy ſelfe capable of that ſweet promiſe, which ſaith, *If a man love me, the Father loveth him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* John 14.12. Then will thy condition be comfortable indeed, when thou haſt got ſuch glorious in-mates as theſe to dwell with thee.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit to the wicked, by way of application from this point; I will now addreſſe my ſelfe to ſpeak unto the godly, and ſhew them how uſefull this point may be unto them. I ſhall firſt ſpeake to ſtrong men, and then unto Babes in Chriſt: to ſuch as can tell me, that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them. Secondly, to ſuch as can tell mee they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to to them: and laſtly, to ſuch who can tell me that they have found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them, but now they have loſt him. To you that tell mee you finde the truth of this doctrine by bleſſed experience, that Chriſt is come to you; I have only two things to ſay: Firſt this, Make it ſure to

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thy ſelfe that Chriſt indeed as a Comforter is come to thee, and that thy ſoule is not deluded in thy joy and conſolation. Secondly, ſtrive ſo to walk; that thy Comforter which is come to thee may never depart from thee. Firſt, ſtrive to make it ſure, that Chriſt indeed come to thee: that the comfort which thou haſt is from the Comforter, to wit: the Spirit of Chriſt; and not from the ſpirit of deluſion.

There is great need that I ſhould preſſe this inſtruction upon you, becauſe the ſpirit of deluſion is plentifully powred out in theſe latter dayes. The hypocrite hath his joy; and and he judges that this his joy, is the joy of the holy Ghoſt, and as good as need to bee: whereas it is a joy that ſhall *periſh* (ſaith the Scripture (a joy that will end in deſperate ſorrow. Hee thinkes that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to him; whereas 'tis only the devill transformed into an Angell of light. And thus indeed are many thouſands gulled and cheated in their comfort. Sadneſſe would overſhadow the ſmiling face of many a man, if he did but diſcerne how grounleſſe his joy and comfort is; and what a vaine ſhadow inſtead of a true ſubſtance, his poore ſoule is deluded withall. Where-

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fore my brethren! it concernes you that tell me, you are ſenſible that the Comforter is come to you; to take paines to make it ſure to your ſelves, that your ſoules are not deluded.

When the Spirit of God came upon *Saul* that he propheſied, the people that knew him before ſaid, *What is come to the ſonne of Kiſh? is Saul amongſt the Prophets?* Thus doe thou ſay to thy ſoule, who art ſo merrie and comfortable, *viz.* What is come to thee O my ſoul! that thou art now ſo joyfull and cheatful? Once I am ſure thou went'ſt mourning all the day long: is Chriſt as a Comforter come to thee? If Chriſt by his Spirit have brought glad tidings to thee, why then O my glorie! continue in thy mirth: but if not; why art thou ſo merrie O my ſoule? thy mirth is but madneſſe. As *David* queſtioned his ſoule for ſadneſſe, ſaying, *Why art thou ſo ſad, O my ſoule? and why art thou ſo caſt downe within me?* So maiſt thou doe well to queſtion thy mirth, ſaying; Why art thou ſo merrie O my ſoule? and why art thou ſo much lifted up within mee? Is thy Comforter our Lord Ieſus Chriſt indeed come to thee? O then my glorie! ceaſe not to declare thy comfort, by any comely poſture and geſture:

ſture: but if not, a houſe of mourning, O my ſoule, is fitter for thee then a houſe of mirth; garments of ſackcloth and ſadneſſe, would better become thee, then garments of joy and gladneſſe. You know how *Iſaac* once ſpake to his ſon, *Art thou* (ſaid he) *my very ſon Eſau?* Gen. 27.24. So do thou humbly queſtion thy Comforter. Art thou my very Comforter indeed? Art thou the *very Chriſt* the Sonne of God, which ſpeakeſt conſolation to my ſoule? You know how *Iohn* queſtioned Chriſt much after this manner, that hee might not be deceived concerning him. *Art thou he that ſhould come, or do we not look for another?* Matth. 11.3. So doe thou ſay, Art thou hee that ſhould come and comfort my ſoule? or ſhould not I look for another? There be many falſe Chriſts, and falſe comforters now in the world, and they deceive many: wherefore I beſeech thee ſpeak out, and ſpeak plainly to my ſoule, whether thou be hee that ſhould comfort mee yea or not, that if I have obtained the true Comforter, I may give God the glorie of his great kindneſſe; if not, I may ſeek out for another.

How ſhould I know (may the ſtrong man in Chriſt ſay to me) whether he that is come to my ſoule with conſolation; be hee that

that ſhould come, or not? How ſhould I be able to make it ſure to my ſoul, that the conſolation which I have is from the Spirit of Chriſt, and not from the ſpirit of deſolution.

To this I thus anſwer, *viz.* If he that is come to thy ſoule be he that ſhould come, to wit, Chriſt; thou ſhalt finde that hee doth more works then one in thy ſoule: hee doth not onely comfort thee, but he edoth many great works beſides this. Chriſt doth many great works in a mans ſoule before he comfoyts him; and hee doth many great workes in his ſoule, after hee hath comforted him. Chriſt doth many great workes in the ſoule of man, before hee comforts him: hee doth break the heart before he bindes it up: hee firſt wounds the heart, before hee will heale it: hee caſts downe the ſoule for ſinne, before hee will raiſe it up. Now to breake the heart of man, which the Scripture compares to an *Adamant*, Zech. 7. 12. for hardneſſe, is a great work; and yet this doth Chriſt throughly, before he comforts throughly. The breaking of the hard heart of man, hath many great works about it, ere it be effected The convincing the ſoule of ſinne, which ſelfe-conceited man is not eaſily brought unto.

The making of ſinne out of meaſure ſinfull, in the ſouls apprehenſion, which blinde man is not eaſily brought to ſee. The making of man to loath himſelfe, for the evils which he hath committed againſt God, which man full of ſelfe-love is not eaſily wrought unto. The making of man to long for peace and reconciliation with God, as the greateſt happineſſe in the world, and to begge this bleſſing with teares, as a ſoule that ſees hee ſhall die and periſh eternally without it; which man that naturally hates God, is not eaſily wonne unto. Yet all theſe difficult workes doth Chriſt doe in the ſoule of man, before hee comes as a Comforter to him. Which Chriſt confirmes, where he ſaith; *Bleſſed are they that mourne, for they ſhall bee comforted.*

Now, would'ſt thou know whether hee that is come to thy ſoule, be hee that ſhould come or not? why then tell me? What did precede thy comfort which now thou haſt? Did Chriſt lead thee to the Wels of Conſolation by the waters of *Marah?* Did hee bring thee to ſowe in teares, ere hee gave thee to reap thy great harveſt of joy? Waſt thou ever in the houſe of mourning? Did the ſpirit of heavineſſe for ſinne ever take hold

hold on thee? Was thy hard heart first broken, and after this, bound up? First wounded, and after this healed? Didst thou goe mourning for dishonouring God all the day long, and after many dolorous dayes spent, did thy Comforter come to thee? Surely then he that is come, is he that should come, and doe not looke for another: but if otherwise; thou hast just cause to be jealous of thy joy.

Againe, Christ as hee doth great works in the soule before hee comforts it; so hee doth great works in the soule after he hath comforted it. That soule which Christ comforts, hee makes a very fruitfull soule in all grace to his glorie. No waters make the soule of a Christian grow in grace, like the waters of Consolation. The comforting Spirit of Christ is to a Christian in the wayes of obedience, as winde and tide to a Ship: that which makes him runne the wayes of Gods Commandments. That Christian which is comforted by Christ, prayes fervently, and prayes frequently. Consolation gives winges to supplication. That Christian which is comforted by Christ, praiseth God with strong affection. A soule comforted by Christ, is as an instrument well tu-

ned by a skilfull Musician: hee will, upon every occasion, make sweet melody in the eares of the Almightie. True consolation is from Heaven, and it carries that soul strongly to Heaven, in which it is. True consolation is from Christ, and it will make a Christian live wholly to Christ. To whom much is forgiven they love much: and his love constraines them to denie themselves, and to follow Christ unto death.

Would'st thou know then for certaine, O strong man in Christ! that he which is come to thy soule, is he which should come? Why then looke what activitie is in thy soule to dutie. Is thy soule as a Gyant refreshed after wine? strong and vigorous to the practise of all good duties? Art thou abundant in the work of the Lord? Art thou a sweet Singer in *Israel* of the praises of the Lord? Is thy heart at thy mouth leaping within thee, like the Babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when thou art telling what God hath done for thy soule? Art thou (in a word) a holy and heavenly man, as one comforted by a holy and heavenly God? Doth thy joy transcend the joyes that this world affords, in sweetnesse? Doth it raise thy spirit to admire

admire the love of God? and doth it make thee dead to ſecular delights? and to account naked carnall mirth madneſſe? empty huskes for brutes to feed on? Then mayeſt thou comfortably conclude, that he which is come to thy ſoul, is he which ſhould come; and do not look for another: but if thou art merry and chearfull, but not holy and heavenly, he that is come to thy ſoule, is not he that ſhould come; wherefore I beſeech thee to looke for another.

A ſecond inſtruction which I would commend to ſtrong men in Chriſt, is this: after thou haſt made it ſure to thy ſoule, that Chriſt as a Comforter is indeed come to thee, then ſtrive ſo to walke, that hee may never depart from thee. So a man may walk, that Chriſt as a Comforter may forſake his ſoule. *David* had wofull experience of this truth, and ſo doubtleſſe have many elſe of the godly. So a man may walk that Chriſt as a Comforter never depart from him. But how ſhould I thus walke, ſaith the comforted ſoule, that I might enjoy this heaven below, till I come to that above, and ſo go from joy to joy; from joy unſpeakeable and full of glorie, to joy that cannot enter into any mortall heart to conceive of?

To this I thus answer, Do not grieve Christ that is come to thee: Secondly, doe all that thou canst to delight him, if thou would'st have him continually abide with thee. Do not sit downe and rest, as one that hath a licence to be lazie, and as if all thy worke were done, now thy Comforter is come to thee; this will grieve him, and quickly make him leave thee. Thou hast obtained Christ to come a Comforter to thee; well: yet let me tell thee as *Moses* did the *Israelites*. *You are not* (said hee) *as yet come to the rest, and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you.* So say I to thee, O comforted soule! thou art not yet come to those degrees of consolation, which thou mayest attaine unto in this life, if thou continue to be thriftie. The joy of the holy Ghost is a bottomlesse Well, which thou canst never draw dry: and the more thou drawest, the fresher and sweeter still shalt thou finde it. The joy of the holy Ghost is no surfetting thing, as some earthly sweets are: and therefore thou mayest safely say, *Lord evermore give me of this bread:* fill my soule with flagons of this precious liquour: let thy love be shed abroad in my heart by the holy Ghost: let my soule delight her self in this fatnesse. Second-

Secondly, now Christ as a Comforter is come to thee, doe not wax wanton against him, this also will grieve him, and make him quickly forsake thy soule as a Comforter. Let all the manifestations of thy comfort bee suitable to thy Comforter: holy as he is holy; spirituall and heavenly, as he is. *When ye are come into the good land, take heed that ye doe not forget the Lord* (said *Moses* to *Israel.*) So say I to you that finde Christ with you as a Comforter, which are come to the fellowship of the Spirit, and to the partitipacion of that transcendent comfort which is by him: take heed that yee grow not giddy headed, and forget God and your selves, The waters of Consolation are strong waters, and mans weak head and heart cannot beare much of them steadily, but are ready to reele on one side or other. When the clouds of heaven have well watered the earth, then doe weeds as well as good hearbs spring apace: so when Christ by his Spirit, sweetly waters the soule with Consolation, then levitie and vanitie, as well as Christian mirth and cheerefulnesse, spring amaine; If a Christian be not very watchfull over his soule, to plucke up such weeds by the roots, as soone as they begin to shew themselves. I con-

clude this thus: thou that art comforted by the Spirit, let not the manifestations of thy comfort grieve the Spirit. This remember, that Satan hath an Art to bring evill out of the greatest good, as God hath an Art to bring good out of the greatest evill: and therfore beg that thou mayest not be ignorant of any of his devices, nor unable to resist them if thou would'st not loose thy Comforter.

Secondly, if thou would'st have thy Comforter to abide still with thee; as thou must not grieve him, so thou must do all that thou cast to delight him. Let bee thy meat and drink to follow all the motions of the Spirit of Christ: whithersoever Christ: would have thee go, cheerefully obey him; this will delight thy Comforter exceedingly, and make him to rejoyce to continue with thee. If Christ say unto thee as to the Fishermen, *Follow mee:* doe thou readily reply as the Scribe, *Master; I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.* Mat.4.19. Mat.8.19. This is to declare the genuine disposition of Christs people, which Christ is exceedingly taken withall. Christs people are a willing people in their obedience. *Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, &c.*

Secondly, humbly and compassionately tell

tell diſconſolate ſoules, what Chriſt hath done for my ſoule: this will delight thy Comforter much, and make him rejoyce to continue with thee. Chriſt delights to ſee his children communicative of the ſweet meats which he gives them. And therefore as *Iael* ſaid to *Barak*, ſo do thou, O comforted ſoule, to ſuch as goe mourning all the day long: *Come* (ſaid ſhe) *and I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt.* Judges 4. 32. Come, O ſad ſoule, that canſt not finde him whom thy ſoule loveth, I will ſhew thee the man whom thou ſeekeſt; the manner of his comming to my poore ſoule; and how long he made me wait upon him, ere hee would come to mee; and how well hee hath now made mee amends for all his ſtaying. And therefore, *Although thou ſayeſt thou ſhalt not ſee him, yet judgement is before him, therefore truſt thou in him.* Job 35. 14. *For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeake and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.* Hab. 2. 3. The more imparting of experiments of love wee are, to the glorie of Chriſt; the more ſtill will Chriſt graciouſly give us to our further comfort. And this indeed is Gods end in comforting ſome of his

children, *that they may bee able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith they themselves are comfoted of God:* as the Apostle sweetly affirmes.

Thirdly, thanke Christ humbly and heartily for his comming to thee; if thou would'st have him abide still with thee. The Israelites when they came into the promised land which flowed with milke and honey, they were to take the first of all the fruits of the earth, and put them in a basket, and so present them to the Priest, saying, *viz. And now behold, I have brought the first fruits of the land, which thou the Lord hast given me:* Deut. 26. Thus were they to set their first fruits before the Lord, and to worship before him, as you may see at large. Why you that enjoy Christ, as a Comforter, you have received the first fruits of that good land, which *Canaan* typified, which flowes with milk and honey. Bring therefore these first fruits, and set them before God, and worship: bring the sweet comforts of the holy Ghost in your hearts, before the Lord, and say, Behold O Christ, these and these are the sweet Consolations of thy Spirit: and lo for them all I humbly render praise to thy Name. Such mightie enemies of my

peace

peace haſt thou conquered: ſuch doubts which ſo long troubled mee, haſt thou anſwered: ſuch wants which ſo long time kept me exceeding low, haſt thou ſupplyed: to thee O God be the glorie of thine owne goodneſſe.

You have great cauſe thus to magnifie the Lord for his mercy, which finde Chriſt as a Comforter come to you. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth all outward bleſſings. The light of Gods countenance lifted up, upon a poore mourning ſoule, 'tis of far greater value then Corne, Wine, Oile; then Corrall, Rubies, or any choice thing that this world can afford. The naked revelation of Chriſt in the ſoule of man, is of more worth then all theſe, ſaith *Solomon*: the moſt glorious revelation of Chriſt then to the ſoule, which the ſoule of man is capable of in this life; muſt needs be of much more tranſcendent worth. You enjoy that bleſſing which exceedeth many inward bleſſings. It exceedeth knowledge: for what is knowledge in the head, to the joy of the holy Ghoſt in the heart? One beame of light in the underſtanding, is of more worth then all the Silver and Gold, Gems, and Jewels in the world; and yet one beame

beame of the light of Gods countenance, shining upon the heart, though but by reflexion from the face of Jesus Christ, is of more worth then all knowledge which humane study can attaine unto. I cannot say that this blessing, exceedeth the least saving grace in the soule: but this I can safely say; that Consolation, 'tis the glosse and glory of every grace: every grace shines in its full lustre, where the Comforter dwels. This I can further say, that you enjoy that blessing which makes Heaven a Heaven, and which makes Earth a Heaven to you: and therefore you have great reason to magnifie the Lord for his mercy. The more of Heaven we enjoy upon Earth, the more should we set our selves to doe the work of them which are in Heaven, whilest on Earth.

Fourthly, finally let Christs mediate comming to thee by his Spirit, make thee long earnestly for his immediate comming to thee in his own person: this delights Christ, that his Spouse should say, *Come*, Revelation 22.17. as the Spirit doth; That shee should long for the wedding day, as he doth. When good old *Simeon* had imbraced the Consolation of *Israel*, for which he so long waited, hee then desired presently to be dissolved

ſolved: ſo thou that haſt imbraced the Conſolation of *Iſrael*, ſhould'ſt in holy manner with *Simeon*, *Iob*, and *Paul*, deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt, which is beſt of all. You whom Chriſt hath kiſſed with the kiſſes of his lips, ſhould long earneſtly to lie betweene his breaſts all night; my meaning is, to have a full enjoyment of Chriſt. Thus have I done ſpeaking to ſuch, who can tell mee that Chriſt as a Comforter is come to them.

In the next place I addreſſe my ſelfe to ſpeak to ſuch of the godly, who can tell mee that they never yet found Chriſt as a Comforter come to them. Two or three things I have to ſay to you from this ſweet doctrine.

Firſt, I would have you to labour to beleeve this doctrine, that Chriſt *will not leave you comfortleſſe, but will certainly* (at laſt) *come to you.* Chriſt hath repeated his promiſe, which is as a bond with many ſeales; and therefore thou haſt juſt ground to beleeve, O comfortleſſe ſoule! that Chriſt *will not leave thee comfortleſſe, but will come to thee.*

Obiect. What juſt ground have I to beleeve, that Chriſt will come to me, ſeeing he is holy, and I am unholy: hee is glorious in

in holineſſe, and I am abominable in ſin and wickedneſſe, ſaith the weake comfortleſſe ſoule.

Sol. Art thou more vile then *Manaſſeh*? Chriſt came to him and comforted him. Art thou more muddy and earthly then *Zacheus*? Chriſt came to him and comforted him. Art thou more diveliſh then *Mary Magdalen*, out of whom were caſt ſeven devils? Chriſt came to her, and filled her ſoule with ſtrong Conſolation. Why ſhould'ſt not thou beleeve, that Chriſt will come to thee too, and quiet and comfort thy mourning ſpirit?

Sol. But ſecondly I anſwer thus: *viz.* Chriſt doth not ſo much look how thou art quallified, as at what hee hath promiſed: Chriſt hath promiſed hee will come to thee, and he is faithfull and will do it. If my ſoule were never ſo poore, never ſo blinde, never ſo wretched, never ſo naked; yet Chriſt having promiſed to come to thee, he will make good his word; though he come backward, with a mantle to cover thy nakedneſſe, as *Shem* and *Iaphet* did to *Noah*. If thy ſoule were full of wounds; if thy ſoule were full of running putrifying ſores, if thou wert as black with ſin as an *Ethiopian*; if thou wert

as

as ſpotted with ſinne as a Leopard; nay, if thy ſoule did ſtinke within thee, as *Lazarus* after taken out of the earth again: yet Chriſt having promiſed to come to thee and comfort thee; he will doe it, though he hold his noſe while he be comforting thy ſtinking naſtie ſoul. Heaven and earth ſhall paſſe away, but not a jot or tittle of Chriſts promiſe ſhall faile. *The voice of my Beloved, behold hee cometh leaping upon the Mountaines, and skipping upon the Hills.* Cant. 2. 8. Though there be mountaines and hils of ſinne in thy ſoule; yet Chriſt will come skipping over all theſe with comfort to my ſoule, rather then thou ſhalt be left comfortleſſe.

Wherefore, O weake, comfortleſſe ſoule! ſay not of thy Saviour and Comforter, as *Balaam* did, *I ſhall ſee him, but not now; I ſhall behold him, but not nigh.* Num. 24. 17. I ſhall ſee Chriſt come with a witneſſe: nay with many thouſand witneſſes at the great day, when *every eye ſhall ſee him*; but I ſhall not ſee him come to me now, in this ſoule dolour, as a Comforter. I ſhall behold him peradventure, as *Moſes* beheld the Holy Land, afarre off: hee will never come nigh my poore ſoule, to ſtay it with thoſe comforts which it needs, Ceaſe, O weake ſoule, this incre-

incredulous language; and ſtrive to beleeve, and this ſweet promiſe I treat of ſhall bee made good unto thee. No ſinne ſo mightie to keep thy Comforter from thee, as unbeliefe. Say then, O mourning Chriſtian, to thy comfortleſſe ſoule; *Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarrie.* Heb.10.37. He that hath ſaid he will come as a Comforter to thee, will come and will ſatisfie thy ſoule with Conſolation, as with marrow and fatneſſe. Say to thy ſad ſoule, with the Pſalmiſt. *My God will come, and will not keepe ſilence:* hee will ſpeake Conſolation ſo plainely, that my ignorant ſoule ſhall underſtand; ſo powerfully, that my incredulous ſoule ſhall beleeve, and owne her owne mercies. Thou art now toſſed and almoſt drowned, O my ſoul, with reſtleſſe wayes of miſerie; but the Spirit will move upon theſe waters; thou ſhalt ſee Chriſt comming towards thee, upon theſe troubleſome wayes anon, and ſay, *bee not afraid, it is I:* I that have loved thee, and given my ſelfe for thee, and none ſhall pluck thee out of my hand.

Secondly, as I would have thee to ſtrive firmly to beleeve this truth; ſo I would have thee endeavour patiently to wait the accompliſhment

compliſhment of it. Beleeve that Chriſt will come to thee, and wait patiently untill hee doe come. There is good ground why every ſoule ſhould patiently wait for Chriſt, comming to him, whether wee conſider our ſelves which are to bee viſited, or Chriſt our viſitour. If thou O comfortleſſe ſoule conſider thy ſelfe which art to bee viſited; there is great reaſon thou ſhouldeſt wait patiently till Chriſt come to thee, how long ſoever he ſtay.

Firſt, thou art a Creature, and Chriſt is thy Creatour; and ſhould not a Creature wait on his Creatour? Thou art a ſervant, and Chriſt is thy Lord: and ſhould not a ſervant wait on his Lord? Conſider thee in thy higheſt relations, and they all call for waiting. Thou art a Sonne, and Chriſt is thy Father: and ſhould not a Sonne wait on his Father? Thou art a Wife, and Chriſt is thy Husband: and ſhould not a Wife wait on her Husband?

Secondly, conſider that thou haſt deſerved, that Chriſt ſhould never come to thee, and yet for all this, ſeeing hee will come to thee, haſt not thou juſt cauſe to wait patiently till hee doe come, how long ſo ever it be firſt? Before thy calling thou didſt reject

Chriſt

Christ; and since thy calling, thou hast often grieved Christ; and hast not thou then deserved that Christ should never come to thee? Thou hast quenched many a sweet motion of the Spirit of Christ: thou hast turned the deafe eare, the sweet still voice that hath spoken behinde thee, times without number, and so slighted the Spirit of Christ; and hast not thou then justly deserved, that Christ as a Comforter should never come to thee? yet seeing he will come, for all this unkindnesse, hast not thou just cause to wait patiently for him, how long so ever he stay? Thou hast many weekes, many moneths, nay many yeeres, gone along in a course of grieving Christ; and doest thou thinke much of waiting a few weekes, a few moneths, a few yeeres, for Christ to come to comfort thee?

Take this in another forme: thou didst make Christ wait a long time upon thee, ere thou wouldest let him abide with thee as a spirit of Reformation: and is there not just cause then, that thou shouldest wait patiently a long time upon him, if he will have it so, ere hee abide with thee as a Spirit of Consolation? how many knocks did Christ give at thy stubborn heart, ere thou wouldest

open

open to him? how much dew of the night distilled upon his lockes, ere thou wouldest give him house roome in thy heart? how many mercies? how many corrections were all spilt upon thee, ere Christ could winne thee to respect him? canst thou tell? if thou canst not; think not much, if Christ make thee shed a few teares, and breath out a few groanes, ere he bring glad tidings of peace unto thee.

Secondly, if thou consider Christ thy visitour, there is all the reason that can be, that thou shouldest wait patiently, till he come to thee. Christ will certainely come to thee: Christ will come to thee at the fittest time: Christ wil come richly when he doth come; which are all speciall grounds of patience. Christ will come thee, O comfortlesse soule! though it may seeme to thee, somthing long first. Thou doest not wait for one that will not come at all, as the *Turke* waiteth for *Mahomet*: nay, thou doest not wait for one that will frivolously delay the time of his comming. Thou doest not wait for one that will deceive thee. Christ hath promised to come to thee, and he is faithfull, and cannot deny himselfe. There is two things in Faithfulnesse: first, that a man should own what

what hee hath ſaid; and then ſecondly, that hee ſhould make it good. Now both theſe will Chriſt doe: Chriſt will not eat his words, as we ſay: what hee hath promiſed he will confeſſe, and will make good; whatſoever labour or loſſe hee bee at to doe it. Chriſt in not mutable as we are, to promiſe one thing to day, and recall it againe to morrow: *hee is immutable and changeth not, therefore we are not conſumed.*

Thou doeſt not wait for one that will frivolouſly delay the time of his comming. Chriſt will not deale with thy comfortleſſe ſoule, as thoſe ſorry gueſts dealt with Chriſt, make excuſes: one had bought a yoke of Oxen, and therefore could not come: another a Farme, &c. Chriſt will not tell thee, as *Abraham Dives* in hell, betweene thy ſoule and him is a great gulfe, ſo that there can be no entercourſe betweene them; Nor that from heaven to earth, is too long a journey for him to make: He will not tell thee, that the place where thy ſicke comfortleſſe ſoule lies, is filthy, and altogether unfit for him to come to: He will not tell thee that thy ſoule is ſo farre gone in griefe and deſparate ſorrow, that it is in vaine for him to come to thee. Chriſt puts none of

of theſe delayes upon any of his patients.

No, the ground why Chriſt ſtayes is, that he may come at the fitteſt time; and then he will come with healing in his wings, if all the devils in hell ſhould oppoſe him, which mee thinkes ſhould be a ſatisfactorie ground of patience, to any diſconſolate ſoule. If a Phyſitian yet apply this, & that, further evacuation; rather then cordials: as knowing the body not yet fit for cordials, will not any wiſe man ſubmit patiently to his way? ſo if Chriſt forbeare giving thy ſicke ſoule cordials, as he that well knowes thy ſoule not fit yet, for ſuch luſcious things, wilt not thou with much thankfulneſſe acknowledge his great care over thy ſoule, and with all patience wait his leaſure? I patiently undergoe the pain of drawing plaiſters, when I know my ſore is not fit for healing: thus ſhould it be in ſpirituall diſtreſſes: we ſhould patiently undergoe griefe and ſorrow untill our ſoules bee fit for conſolation, and then wee ſhall be ſure to have it.

Finally, be ſure of this, O mourning ſoule! that Chriſt will come richly, when hee doth come; and therfore me thinks thou ſhould'ſt wait patiently for him: what Merchant but would

would wait patiently, the returne of his ship in the longest voyage, if he were sure that it would richly returne at last. Christ will come very richly furnished, with the comforts of the holy Ghost, which are unspeakable and glorious, to your soules that mourne after him, and wait for him. What the Apostle once spake of himself in relation to the *Romanes*; that may I truly say of Christ, in relation to all tha mourne after him: *And I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come* (saith he) *in the fulnesse of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.* Rom 15 29. Christ I am sure, O mourning soule! when hee doth come unto thee, he will come in the fulnesse of the blessing of the holy Ghost: thou shalt have joy in the holy Ghost unspeakeable and glorious. Thou by long waiting art made a more vast vessell, to hold the precious waters of consolation; and Christ by long staying, doth (as I may say) the more furnish himselfe with these waters of life, to refresh, fill, and satisfie thy thirstie soule, when hee comes to thee. Christ will heale throughly thy broken heart, and binde up all thy wounds: he will answer all thy doubts, and clear all thy scruples: hee will quiet thy quarrelling conscience, and still thy complaining

plaining ſpirit: he will fill thy ſad ſoule with joy and gladneſſe, and thy dejected ſpirit with ſongs of thankſgiving.

If theſe things, O mourning ſoule! will not make thee wait patiently, till thy Comforter come to thee, but thou wilt murmure and repine, and fall upon indirect wayes to get conſolation; know, that by this practiſe, thou wilt make thy condition more miſerable, then at preſent it is; Thou wilt grieve him that ſhould come as a Comforter to thee: and if thou by ſin make Chriſt grieve; how can Chriſt by his Spirit make thee rejoyce? and if thou ſet him a mourning that can only comfort thee; by whom wilt thou be comforted? Doſt thou thinke to winne Chriſt to thee, by a dogged diſpoſition? Chriſt may pitty, and cure thy humours, but t'will never bee by conſolation. Hee will bring thee to bee lowly and meeke ere thou ſhalt finde reſt to thy ſoule: hee will make thee willing to lie under his feet; glad of crums of comfort, and willing to wait for them till Chriſt hath denied, and every child ſerved.

If thy corrupt ſoule hanker after the pleaſure of ſin againe, becauſe Chriſt as a Comforter doth not come to thee, and thou bee reſolved

resolved to pick and chuse, amongst the sins thy soule knows, to finde out one that thy soule most loves, to make a Comforter to thee, as the *Israelites* in their dogged humour made them a captaine to returne to *Ægypt* againe; know this, that what sin thou pitcheſt upon to make a Comforter, that sin will Christ make a devill to torture thee: Christ will make the know by wofull experience, that the sweeteſt sin is a bitter and miserable comforter: that the leaſt sinne, is too great an evill, truly to comfort the soule: that to go to the devill for consolation, is to make faſter haſte for comfort, then good speed: that neither sin, nor any thing in the world beside sin shall comfort thy soule; when hee himselfe will not.

3 The laſt instruction that I have to commend to thee, O comfortleſſe soule! that did'ſt never yet finde Christ as a Comforter come to thee, is this: obſerve how Christ comes, and do not put him off. Christ comes to comfortleſſe souls with comfort, in a promiſe; as I have at large shewed you. The promiſe, Christ opens before the soule, that he may see the bleſſing wrapt up in it, which he needs: and then often repeates it to the soule, that he may relie upon it: instances to illuſtrate

illuſtrate this way of Chriſt, I have given you, things muſt not be here againe repeated. That which here I would preſſe by way of Application, is, that you which are comfortleſſe ſoules, would obſerve this ſecret way of the Comforter, and meet him. Art thou tempted? and doſt thou now heare a ſweet ſtill voyce, as it were behind thee, ſaying, *My grace ſhall be ſufficient for thee?* Why this is the voyce of thy Beloved, that is come to thee, embrace what he ſaith, reſt upon it, turne not thy Comforter away now, by unbeliefe, and peeviſh pettiſh humours. Haſt thou fallen into ſinne, by the ſtrength of temptation, and thine owe corruption? and doſt thou heare ſuch a ſweet voyce behinde thee as this. *The blood of Ieſus Chriſt cleanſeth us from all ſin?* 1. *Ioh.* 1. 7. Why this is the language of thy beloved, he is come to comfort thee, O mourning ſoule, do not thruſt him away by unkind language of unbeliefe and paſſion. Hear what he ſaith, for it is ſweet: ſtrive to beleeve what he ſaith, for it is ſure. As *Iſaac* ſaid unto *Iacob* his ſonne, after he had had ſome diſcourſe at a diſtance with him, *Come neere*

'Tis with many Chriſtians in their minority, as it was with *Samuel*, they doe not know the voice of the Lord, ſpeaking in a promiſe, and therfore I thought good to note this laſt inſtruction.

neere now and kisse me my sonne: Gen.27.26. So should such comfortlesse soules say to Christ, when they heare Christ speaking, as it were at a distance, softly and coldly to them, the sweet and melodious promises of his word; come neere now, O my beloved, and kisse me with these kisses of thy lips, for thy love is better then wine: what thou sayest to my soul, say it with such life, that my heart may no longer bee faithlesse, but beleeve, and give glory to thee, I have now done speaking to you, who never yet had the Comforter come to you.

I come now in the last place to speake a word or two particularly, to such of Gods people, who can tell mee that they have found Christ as a Comforter come to them, but now have lost Him. Three things I have to say to these. First, labour to be sensible of thy losse. Secondly, blame not Christ for departing from thee. Thirdly, use all holy meanes to get him to returne to thee againe. First I would have thee, O deserted soule! to labour be truly sensible of thy losse. Though it bee that some are deeply sensible of this great losse; yet others are as deeply stupid, which moves me to note this instruction. For a man to be stupid and senselesse

leſſe under corporall afflictions; argues a verie ill temper of ſpirit; but for a man to bee ſtupid and ſenſeleſſe under ſpirituall afflictions, under ſuch a ſpirituall affliction as this; the loſſe of the Sunne. The loſſe of Chriſt as a Comforter, argues a very ill temper of ſpirit indeed. Strive therefore, O deſerted ſtupid ſoule! to affect thine heart throughly with thy loſſe. Thou haſt loſt more then *Iob*: when hee had loſt children, ſubſtance, health, honours, and friends: nay thou haſt loſt more, then if thou hadſt loſt this world; nay, thou haſt loſt more then if thou hadſt loſt thy life, which is of more worth then the world: thou haſt loſt Chriſt, which is richer then this world, and ſweeter then thy life. What an infinite loſſe were it to this world, to looſe the Sunne? 'twere at once to looſe all: *Perennte ſole, pereunt omnia*; for all things ſerviceable for the uſe of man, depend upon the motion and influence of that glorious Bodie. What a loſſe then is it to the leſſer world, to looſe Chriſt the Sunne of Righteouſneſſe? 'Tis to looſe all good at once, for ſoule and body. All Graces cloſe and wither when Chriſt departs, as all fragrant flowers when the Sunne withdraweth his influence. And when theſe flowers w-

ther in the ſoule, a man is a moving Dunghill, that ſtinkes in the noſtrils of God and man, where ever he comes. A man that hath loſt Chriſt, may truely ſay as ſhee when the Arke was loſt, *that his glory is departed.* As the Sunne in the glorie of the greater World, ſo Chriſt the Sunne of Righteouſneſſe, is the glorie of the leſſer World, to wit; man.

Thou haſt loſt that in the world, that is the world, that is more worth then the world, and which all the world can never help thee to. Thou haſt loſt that which would have made the worſt condition in this life, a Heaven; whereas the beſt without it, is but a hell. Thou haſt loſt that which would have beene to thy ſoule a continuall feaſt; whereas now thy ſoule is in a continuall famine and leanneſſe. Thou haſt loſt thy ſpirits, and thy ſoul is in a deadpalſie, ſo that thou art a living dead man, fit for no ſpirituall ſervice. Thou haſt loſt thy head, thou haſt loſt thy eyes, thou haſt loſt thy hands, thou haſt loſt thy cloathing; nay, thou haſt loſt thy beſt father, thy beſt husband, thy beſt friend; all this, and much more comfort is Chriſt to man. Thou haſt great reaſon then, O deſerted ſoul, to lay to heart thy loſſe.

Lay

Lay to heart thy losse, this is comely, but doe not blame Christ from departing from thee, this is uncomely, and unrighteous. Uncomely; for it doth not suit with wisedomes children, to lay folly to their Maker. Unrighteous, for thou constrain'st him to depart from thee, otherwise he had never left thee: thou didst sinne againe and againe of weakenesse, and yet Christ as a Comforter did not depart from thee, untill thou beganst to take *pleasure in unrighteousnesse*, and to make sinne a custome, *a right eye*, a very serviceable thing unto thee, Christ did not leave thee. Thou beganst to wax wanton against Christ, and then Christ cast thee off. Thou beganst to play the Apostate, and to backslide in heart from Christ; and then hee fell off from Christ; and then he fell off from thee, *and filled thee with thine owne wayes*. Now these things seriously considered, hast thou any cause to blame CHRIST for departing from thee? It is a comely and a very righteous thing for Wisedomes children to justifie wisedome in all his wayes, as to others, so to our selves. Wherefore thus doe, O deserted soule; say, righteous art thou, O Christ, in deparring from mee, and righteous mayst

thou be, if thou never returne to me, ſo unkindly have I dealt with thee.

Then ſet thy ſelfe ſeriouſly to the uſe of all holy meanes, whereby thou maiſt get thy Comforter to returne to thee. Examine thy ſoule throughly thou muſt, to finde out what evill depived thee of ſo great a good; and in ſerious ſoule-ſearching, God will ſpeak to thy conſcience, and conſcience will ſpeake plainly to thee, and tell thee wherein thou didſt give diſtaſte to thy Comforter, and what was the cauſe he forſooke thy ſoule.

And when thon haſt found out that evill, which conſcience tels thee, deprived thee of ſo great a good, thou muſt fall very ſoule with it, how ſweet ſoever it hath been vnto thee. Thy great work muſt be, to bring thy heart o a holy *revenge* upon this ſinne: to abhorre it, and thy ſelfe becauſe of it: and to become very vile, as *Iob* ſaith, and very low in thine owne eyes. Bring thy heart to admire the infinite patience and mercie of God, that things are no worſe with thy ſoul. That God had not cut thee off, in the acting of that ſin for which he deſerted thee: that hee hath left any place for repentance, and given the leaſt deſire to ſet about this work.

And when thou art come thus far; poſſibly the

the light of Gods countenance may begin now and then, to glance into thy ſoule, as at ſome little cranny: or at leaſt ſome more then ordinary lightſomneſſe, may appear in thy dark dull ſoule, as there doth in the dark morning, ſome ſpace of time before the ſun appeares, that had left this Horizon. Now this beam of light, or this little lightſomneſſe of ſoule, thou muſt much admire; and acknowledge an unfathomed depth of love in it; that God ſhould ſo much as once ſtoope, to caſt an eye after thee more, to give thy ſoule the leaſt refreſhing, that did abuſe flagons of love.

By this glimpſe of light, or glimmering light, you are to ſtengthen your faith, in the beliefe of this; that light will more and more appeare, as the light of the morning unto the perfect day: and ſo conſequently to follow God with ſo much the more fervencie of prayer, for the return of his *wonted kindneſſe*. *Ioſeph*, you know carried himſelf very roughly to his brethren which had abuſed him, for ſome ſpace of time; and put them in great fear of the loſſe of their lives; told them they were *Spies*, and many harſh words he gave them, and harſh lookes: but at laſt when his brethren had brought him to *Benjamin*, and

courſed a while, *Ioſephs* bowels began to worke, and hee could no longer with-hold his brotherly love, *Come near to mee, I pray you, I am Ioſeph your brother, &c.* Thus Chriſt our elder Brother deales with us, who doe unkindly and unbrotherly uſe him: hee will handle us very roughly, and put us in fear of the loſſe of our beſt lives: he will make our conſciences ſpeake bitter things againſt us; and let looſe the devill to tell us that we are *Spies*, hypocrites, and falſe friends to Chriſt: in this diſtracted, affrighted, perplexed ſtate, he may hold us many dayes, many weekes, many moneths; but hee cannot hold in his brotherly love alwayes, if we patiently bear his frownes, and kindly intreat him, and bring *Benjamin* to him, his owne blood and merits; this will make his bowels work; and make him unmask himſelf and ſay, come near to me, O mourning ſoules, toſſed and not comforted; I am Chriſt your elder Brother, whom yee unkindly uſed: in a little wrath I hid my face from you, but now with everlaſting kindneſſe will I embrace you.

Trinuni Deo gloria.

FINIS.

CHRISTS COMMVNION

With his Church *Militant*.

2. Tim. 4. *verse* 22.

The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy spirit.

THis Text is *Pauls* sweet affectionate farewell to *Timothie*. Many grave and gracious instructions *Paul* had given *Timothie*; but 'tis not much what man saith to the eare, as what Christ saith to the heart that workes effectually, to set man about his dutie; and therefore doth *Paul* in the conclusion of all his Christian counsell to *Timothy* pathetically pray, *That the Lord Iesus Christ would be with his Spirit.*

The best teaching of man, is but as water spilt on the ground unlesse Christ inwardly teach the spirit. If I am taught my duty by a

Paul, one in gifts not inferiour to the chiefest Apostles, yet unlesse Christ bee with my spirit, to make things take root there; all will die and wither, like good seed cast into bad ground. And therefore *Paul* saw it but needfull, as to teach the eare, so to intreat the Lord to teach and strengthen the spirit. *The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy Spirit.*

There is a great distance (you know) betweene the eare and the heart: it is an easie thing for man to bring home things unto the one, but no lesse then the almighty power of Christ, will bring home things unto the other. There is an incomparable hardnesse upon the heart of man naturally: it is harder then an *Adamant*: now though a child with his little finger, may make a dint upon dow, yet a Gyant with all his strength, cannot make dints upon an *Adamant*; muchlesse can all created strength, make divine impressions upon the spirit of man; and therefore it is, that *Paul* doth implore an Almightie strength to do thus, *The Lord Iesus Christ be with thy Spirit.*

Why doth not *Paul* here, wish riches and honours and pleasures unto *Timothie?* Is the bare presence of Christ with a mans spirit such a blessing? To this I answer riches and honours,

honours,&c. They are *bona*,but not *optima*: good things,but not the beſt things. Earthly things though good in themſelves, yet are no further forth good to mee, then as the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is with my ſpirit, to guide it to uſe them;and therefore *Paul* as one truly wiſe,prayed for the prime good for *Timothy*; for that good which makes all other things worke together good,to wit, *That to have the Lord Ieſus Chriſt with our ſpirits,is a prime and principall bleſſing*. *Paul* here wiſheth it to *Timothy*,as a cardinall bleſſing, *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit*.

Enucleatio propoſitionis.

To have Chriſt with our ſpirits,&c. How can Chriſt be preſent with man upon earth, who is now aſcended,and ſitteth at the right hand of his Father in heaven?

The Apoſtle doth hint an anſwer to this queſtion, in the forme of his prayer, if you obſerve it. *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt ſaith hee, be with thy ſpirit*. He ſpeakes of ſuch a preſence, as will fitly yeeld Communion and fellowſhip to the ſpirit of man. There is a double preſence of Chriſt with man, corporall and ſpirituall joyntly; or meerly ſpirituall. With juſt men made perfect in glorie, Chriſt is corporally preſent; they behold his wounded

wonnded body made a glorious body, as a continuall assurance of the Resurrection of their owne vile bodies, unto the same similitude. And with them Christ is present, spiritually filling them with those joyes, the taste of which upon earth, is called *unspeakable and full of glorie.* Of this comm union speaks Christ himself. *I in them, & thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.* Joh. 17.23 As the soule is *tota in toto, & tota in qualibet parte*: according to the whole, in that whole which is lesse noble then it selfe: according to the whole, that is, according to that full force & energy which the soul hath, it actuates & organizeth, every member of the body, the least as well as the greatest; So Christ in the mysticall body of Saints glorified, is as I may say, *Totus in toto, & totus in qualibet parte.* Whole Christ doth wholly exercise dominion in every glorified soul; hence it is, that all such souls, are wholly holy, & wholly happy; that is perfectly holy, and perfectly happy: for as much as Christ, who is in the fulnesse of his Fathers glorie is fully present with them.

Secondly, there is a presence of Christ with man, meerly spirituall; that is, such a presence; as whereby not the person, but the provi-

providence of Christ may be seen, Such a presence as *superiora* have with *inferiora*, not a *contiguall*, but a *vertuall* presence; a presence of influence and governance, as the Sun hath with us, by his rayes and beames. And this presence is either *Commune* or *Speciall*.

The Commune presence of Christ with man, is that whereby man is upheld and guided, according to the being of a rationall creature. Of this presence of Christ with man, speakes the Apostle, *that they should seek the* Lord, *if happily they might feele after him and finde him though hee be not farre from every one of us, for in him we live, move, and have our being*. Acts 17 27,28. Christ as an upholder of each creature, is not farre from every one of us: that is; hee is still present with us thus, and *with all Nations of men, which hee hath made of one blood, to dwell upon the face of the earth*. This presence of Christ with man therefore, cannot properly be called a *prime* and *principall blessing*, a choise and favour, because it is Commune to mankinde in generall; yea Commune to all creatures below man, for God is with all the works of his hands, to uphold every creature according to 'its proper species

Secondly,

Secondly, there is a ſpeciall preſence of Chriſt with man which is that efficacious working of the Spirit of Chriſt, in the ſpirit of man; whereby it is made one ſpirit, with the Spirit of Chriſt, in willing and nilling, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Hee that is joyned to the Lord is one Spirit.*

There is a ſpeciall preſence of Chriſt, with the bodies of men, for the good of them; which the *Pſalmiſt* intimates where he ſaith, *That he knows our frame, and remembers that we are but duſt: and that the Angels of the Lord pitch their tents about the righteous.* And *Iacob* found the truth of this by experience, when hee fled before *Eſau*, and ſlept ſo ſweetly upon a ſtone. But this tender and ſpeciall preſence and providence of Chriſt, reſpecting the outward man, is comprehended under the other, which reſpects the inward man, as *quid minus ſub majori*, a leſſe bleſſing under a greater. For if God be in a ſpeciall manner preſent with my ſpirit, to guide and order that unto all Holy wayes, my ſpirit will command my bodie to walke in them too: and ſo conſequently Chriſt cannot chuſe, but be tenderly preſent with mee alſo, for the good of that, whilſt every member thereof, is actuated

actuated by a ſpirit of His own ordering, to his own honour, *as weapons of righteouſneſſe*. And therefore doth *Paul* (pithily to ſpeake much in few) ſilently paſſe over that, which is neceſſarily preſuppoſed; praying that Chriſt would be with *Timothies* ſpirit, and then he was ſure, Chriſt would bee after a ſpeciall manner preſent, with his bodie too, for the good of that. *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be with thy ſpirit.* That is, *the Lord Ieſus Chriſt exerciſe a ſpeciall dominion in thy ſpirit, for the guiding and ordering of it, unto the avoyding of evill, and to the performing of all good, whereby Chriſt may have all the glory, due to his Name.*

Now that thus to have Chriſt preſent with a mans ſpirit, is a prime and principall bleſſing; I will plainely demonſtrate to you by a triple argument *ab effectu*.

Thus to have Chriſt preſent with our ſpirits, is the ready way to all temporall, ſpirituall, and eternall good: and therefore muſt needs be a prime and principall bleſſing.

Thus to have Chriſt preſent with a mans ſpirit, is the ready way unto all temporall good. Men whoſe ſpirits, Chriſt doth after a ſpeciall manner order, to avoide ſinne, and

to

to *keep themselves pure*, as *Paul* here useth the expression to *Timothy*, all temporall good things, so farre forth as may bee good for them, belong unto them by promise: *For godlinesse hath the promise of this life. It shall come to passe* (saith the Lord) *if you walke in my wayes, that I will blesse you in the fruit of the wombe, in the fruit of the field, in the basket and store, &c. If you walk in my wayes I will do this, &c.* Why, they with whose spirits Christ is after a speciall manner present, this is their *highway* (as *Salomon* saith) *to depart from evill:* that is; this is their daily endevour, to walke in all the waies of the Lord; and so consequently, all temporall good of right belongs unto them.

But you will say, how is it then, that those with whose spirits Christ is most present to make most tender for his honour, have usually least of all temporall good things?

To this the answer is easie and manifold. Men with whose spirits Christ is most present, to make them most tender to avoide sinne, and to keepe themselves pure, these the divell doth most of all maligne, and sets his limmes to *spoile them of their goods*. as the

Authour

Authour to the *Hebrewes* ſaith, to keepe them from that, which Chriſt would have them advanced to; or elſe to ſtrip them of that, which Chriſt hath conferred on them, by impriſonment, baniſhment and the like; and ſo make ſuch live in dens and holes, and caves of the earth; to wander in Deſerts and Wilderneſſes, wearing ſheep skinnes, and goat-skinnes, whom the world is not worthy. Where a ſpirit of malice and confuſion rules, 'tis no marvell to ſee ſervants ſet on horſe-back, and Princes go on foot.

Secondly, men with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, he takes ſpeciall notice to what evill the ſpirit is moſt enclined, and ſo anſwerably gives of theſe outward things unto them. A wiſe Father hath his eye upon the diſpoſition of his child, and to what exorbitancie he findes him enclined, hee labours to prevent all occaſions to it, and ſo keeps his childe ſhort of what hee could otherwiſe liberally allow him. And thus 'tis with our heavenly Father, reſpecting his children: he eyes ſtrictly their ſpirits, and if hee ſee them inclined to pride, covetouſneſſe, or any other ſcandalous vice, he ſhortens them in that, which may foment theſe. At this (I thinke) *Iames*

may

may point, where he ſaith, *Let the rich rejoyce in that he is made low.* Iam. 1. 10. God out of tender love to his children, oft times makes them poore in purſe, that they may become poore in ſpirit, and ſo capable of the kingdom of heaven. Which rightly weighed, is not matter of ſorrow, but matter of joy, as *Iames* ſaith.

Thirdly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, to guide them to walke in his wayes, and to keepe themſelves pure; Chriſt doth prove them by povertie, as by other things: and hence it may come to paſſe; that Chriſtians very holy, may yet notwithſtanding be very deſtitute of the things of this life. Thus you know the Lord dealt with *Iob.* Chriſt was after a ſpeciall manner preſent with his Spirit, to guide him to walke uprightly above many in his time. Now to make knowne this to the world, to his owne glorie, and *Iobs* eternall honour, he ſtript *Iob* of all, and ſet him upon a dunghill, who before ſat with the chiefeſt in ſeats of honour. God will have the world know, that thoſe with whoſe ſpirits hee is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, to guide and order them, are not as thoſe with whoſe ſpirits the divell is in a ſpeciall

ſpeciall manner preſent, to guide and order; to wit, ſuch as will winde and turne every way when put to it.

Laſtly, thoſe with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, they deſire but little of the things of this life; and therefore 'tis no marvell, to ſee Chriſtians very holy, yet not very wealthy. Chriſtians with whoſe ſpirit Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, they only deſire daily bread; *Agurs* portion, food convenient; and this the Lord gives them, and with this they are contented, which is the only wealthy eſtate, Chriſtians, with whoſe ſpirits Chriſt is after a ſpeciall manner preſent, *they hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe*, not after riches in the world: they *covet the beſt gifts*, the unſearchable riches of Chriſt, and not the fading riches of this life. Now Chriſt applies himſelfe, to be moſt liberall in the diſtribution of that, which the ſpirits of men moſt bend after; in mercy, or in juſtice. Chriſtians whoſe ſpirits moſt ſtrongly bend after grace; to Theſe Chriſt in mercie doth moſt bountifully apply himſelfe, to give grace; according to that of Chriſt, *Bleſſed are they that hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſſe, for they ſhall be filled.* Chriſtians whoſe ſpirits moſt

most strongly bend after worldly riches, to these oft times Christ in justice most liberally applyes himselfe to give those, according to that of the Psalmist, *Whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure.* According likewise to that of *Solomon, There is a sore evill which I have seene under the Sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt:* Psal. 17. 11. Eccles 5. 13. The objection being thus answered, the argument is still of force. That to have Christ with our spirits, is the way to all temporall good, and so consequently, *a prime and principall blessieg.*

But that I may yet more fully speake in this argument, note that temporall good, is either positive, or privative; (if I may for illustrations sake so distinguish.) Temporall good in a positive sense, is that secular thing, which is in it selfe good; as bread, and cloathing, and the like, of which wee have already spoken.

Temporall good privatively so called, is affliction ordered to a mans good, which in it selfe is not so. Now all those with whose spirits Christ is present, are partakers of this temporall good. All outward crosses tend to their inward gaine, because Christ is with their spirits. For all outward troubles are heavier

heavier or lighter, more hurtfull or more profitable ſtill to a man, as Chriſt is pleaſed to order his Spirit under them. A little outward trouble, if Chriſt let it ſeize upon a mans ſpirit, he quickly ſinks and dyes under his burthen, according to that of the Apoſtle, *worldly ſorrow cauſeth death.* The loſſe of a wife or husband; nay, the loſſe of a child or friend; nay, the loſſe of the leaſt outward content, if Chriſt ſtand aloofe from a mans ſpirit, and let it faſten upon him, he will ſoone languiſh, and bleed inwardly to death; whereas all outward afflictions, meeting together upon the outward man, if Chriſt be with the ſpirit, to ſupport and beare up that, a Chriſtian ſweetly ſubmits, and keeps on his way, according to that of the Apoſtle, *Rejoycing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing inſtant in prayer:* Rom. 12.12. Now Chriſt tenderly watches, when outward troubles begin to take hold of that Spirit, with whom hee is ſpecially preſent, and then hee quickly releeves and eaſes it; and not only ſo, but ſanctifies it, to the drawing of ſuch a ſpirit nearer to God in love, according to that of *David*, Pſal 116. 1,2. *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voyce, and my ſupplications, becauſe hee hath inclined*

inclined his eare unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. Adde this to the former, that to have Christ with our spirits; is the ready way to all temporall good, whether *positive*, or *privative*; and you must needs grant it to be a principall blessing.

Secondly, those with whose spirits Christ is specially present, are in the ready way to all spirituall good: and therefore thus to have Christ present with our spirits, must needs be counted a principall blessing. Christ is the author and worker of all grace; and therefore such spirits must needs be verie gracious with whom Christ is. *The places are holy whereunto the Ark of the Lord hath come*, saith *Solomon*, 2 Chron. 8. 11. I may truly say it of Christ, which the Ark typified. The spirits are holy with whom Christ is, and where holy Christ comes. They are at the well-head for holinesse, which have holy Christ with their spirits.

They that have Christ with their spirits, are in the ready way to the verie height of heavenly wisdome as Christ is. With him are all the treasures of wisdome. Hee that lyes in thy bosome, teaching thee wisdome secretly, came out of the verie bosome of the Almightie, and knowes all things; and he

he gives ſuch an unction to that Spirit which he teaches, that hee makes it know and diſcerne all things too.

They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are in the ready way to the verie height of love, which is the glorie of all graces, in the ſight of God and man; for there is no ſuch worker and winner of love, as Chriſt is. If hee doe but *put in his finger by the hole of the doore*, hee will make a mans bowels melt after him. If hee doe but reveale his love to our ſpirits a little; our ſpirits grow ſick of love unto him. He will wound us with one of his eyes, ſo full of beautie is hee. Let a mans ſpirit be never ſo cold; yet if Chriſt be with it, he is in the ready way to burn with love to Chriſt, as ſtrong as death, which many waters cannot quench.

They that have Chriſt with their ſpirits, are in the ready way to the verie height of joy and conſolation: they are in the ready way to joy *unſpeakable and full of glorie. Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you, &c.* ſaid Chriſt to his Diſciples. Chriſt ſpeaks ſuch things to the ſpirits of thoſe with whom he is preſent; as fills their ſpirits with joy, to the verie brim; and this oft times in the verie depth of all outward extremitie. The

Church

Church doth darkly hint this. *The Comforter which ſhould releeve my ſoule is far from me*: Lam. 1. 16. As if the Church had ſaid, though my outward miſerie be exceeding great, yet if the Comforter did but keep cloſe to my ſpirit, I ſhould have as much conſolation as my heart could hold, in the midſt of all my miſerie: but this is my miſerie, that the Comforter which ſhould releeve my ſoule is far from me: out of the hearing of ſighs and groans: nay, out of the hearing of ſtrong cryes; *he is angrie againſt my prayers*. In a word, a Chriſtian which hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, is in the ready way to *excell in vertue*, as *David* ſayes: to excell in all vertue; to be wiſer than his teachers; more excellent in all grace than his neighbours. And therefore, to have Chriſt preſent with our ſpirits, muſt needs be counted and called, *A prime and principall bleſſing*.

Laſtly, to have Chriſt with our ſpirits, is the ready way unto eternall good; and therefore a principall bleſſing. As a ſtone carries with it, whatſoever light thing be faſtened to it, unto its own center; ſo Chriſt whoſe proper place of reſidence is Heaven, carries with him thither, all ſuch ſpirits as to whom he is united on earth. If we have a ſpeciall

a ſpeciall friend at Court, we count that we are in a ready way to ſee all the pomp of the Prince. Chriſt hath the keyes of Heaven and Hell; hee opens and no man ſhuts; ſhuts, and no man can open: all with whoſe ſpirits he hath dwelt, and been kindly uſed upon earth, hee knowes; and when they ſhall knock at thoſe everlaſting gates, hee will open and let them in to everie roome in his royall dwelling, and ſhew them all the glorie which he had with his Father before the world was. 'Tis betweene Chriſt and that ſpirit with whom he lives, as betweene *Naomi* and *Ruth*: where the one lives the other will. Whileſt ſuch ſpirits live in the body, Chriſt will live with them there; when they remove out of the body, Chriſt will not leave them (*death cannot ſeperate*) but commands his Angels to bring them to eternall manſions with himſelfe. Chriſt which is lifted up to glorie himſelfe, will draw up all ſuch unto him, as in whoſe ſpirits hee dwels, and no ſtrength ſhall bee able to withſtand him; none ſhall pluck ſuch out of his hand. *Unio cum Chriſto, eſt unio inumibilis.*

If to have Chriſt with our ſpirits bee a grand favour, not to have him with our ſpi-

nits, must needs be a grand evill. A spirit without Christ is naked, as a body without cloaths. Many things may make cloathing and defence for the body, but only Christ that *best garment*, as the Father of the Prodigall cals him, can make cloathing and munition for the soule. A mans spirit without Christ is as a naked body amongst thornes, everie thorne pierceth, and everie bryar scratcheth, and fetcheth bloud from such a body; so worldly cares and worldly feares, when strong, will pierce such a naked spirit thorow and thorow, and make him run mad, if God (unsought) doe not seasonably step in and bridle the Bedlam. A mans spirit without Christ, is as a naked body amongst Serpents; everie Serpent stings and venoms such a naked body to death; so everie seed of the Serpent stings and poysons to death such naked soules, by their threatnings, flatteries, examples, and the like. A mans spirit without Christ, is as a naked body in great blasts of lightning; such bodies are suddenly scorcht and consumed; so such naked soules are suddenly blasted, by the fierie darts of the Devill, and so suddenly oft times goe from burning to burning; from burning in sin, to burning in Hell.

A mans

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not only naked, but blind too. A naked man having his ſight, may make ſome ſhift; but a man naked and blind too; is in a miſerable helpleſſe ſtate indeed: and juſt ſuch is the ſtate and condition of everie mans ſpirit, that hath not Chriſt with it: for as the Sun in the Heavens is the eye and light of the greater world; ſo the Sun of righteouſneſſe Chriſt, is the eye and light of the leſſer world, man. Now doe but imagine what a dark dolorous condition wee ſhould all be in, if the Sun were darkened, or had utterly forſaken our Horizon; or do but think of that darkneſſe, which was upon the Ægyptians for a little time, when no man could ſtir out of his place; and ſuch and much worſe is the dark dolorous condition of a ſpirit without Chriſt, not able to ſee the leaſt beame of ſaving light, not able to ſtir a ſtep out of his place, in the way that leads to life.

A mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not onely blind, but dumb too. A man that is blind, yet if hee can ſpeake, can beg for that which hee cannot ſee to worke for. But when a man is blinde, and dumb too; that hee can neither help himſelfe, nor beg of others, hee is in a dole

full condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the condition of every mans ſpirit that hath not Chriſt with it. For as Chriſt is Eyes to the ſoule, ſo he is a Mouth and Tongue, enabling to cry *Abba Father*. Vnleſſe the ſpirit of Chriſt be with our ſpirits, helping our infirmities, who are godly; we are dumb, and not able to ſpeak to our owne Father, as adopted children for daily bread; much more unable to beg for life, to the dreadfull Judge of all the world, muſt all ungodly perſons needs be, whoſe ſpirits are altogether without Chriſt, as an helper. I would have all men that live in their ſins, think ſeriouſly of this; when Chriſt as the dreadfull Judge of all the world at the great day ſhall ask you, what you have to ſay for your ſelves, that you ſhould not eternally dye for your ſins, in which you have lived, you will bee like that man which was without his wedding garment, dumb and not able to ſay a word for your ſelves, becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. 'Tis impoſſible that a mans owne guiltie ſpirit ſhould be able to look the terrible Judge of men and Devils in the face, much leſſe ſpeake a word for mercie, unleſſe the Almightie Spirit of Chriſt be with it, to aid it. Many ignorant

wretches

wretches ſooth themſelves with this, that they will at laſt cry, Lord, Lord, and ſo prevaile quickly for pardon with him, who is infinite in mercie. Why, but think on this, O ignorant ſoule! *No man can call Ieſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Thou wilt not in thy greateſt need be able to cry Lord, Lord, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit. Death will ſting thee, conſcience will gnaw thee, Chriſt will condemne thee, Devils will teare thee; and yet wilt not thou bee able to cry, Lord, Lord, have mercie on me, unleſſe the Lord be with thy ſpirit: but in ſtead of crying Lord, Lord, for mercie, thou wilt burne in malice againſt the Lord, and curſe and blaſpheme as Devils and damned wretches doe. Haſt thou never ſeene condemned wretches, not only dumb, but withall; deſperate too: and leap off the ladder themſelves, without either asking God or man forgiveneſſe? Thus in a ſpirituall ſenſe, and much worſe, wilt thou doe in the great day of judgement, for as much as Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit.

Fourthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is not only blind and dumb, but deafe too. And if a man be blind and dumb, yet if hee can heare, he may make ſome ſhift to help himſelfe:

ſelfe: we follow a thing (we know) ſometimes by the ſound, when wee cannot ſee it, nor ſpeak what it is: but when a man is naked, blind, dumb, and deafe too, hee is in a helpleſſe condition indeed; and juſt ſuch is the ſtate of a mans ſpirit without Chriſt. For Chriſt, as he is Eyes and Tongue, ſo he is Eares alſo to the ſoule of man. Hence it is that *Iohn* ſpeaks ſo frequently of ſpirituall hearing, after a *Hypotheticall* manner: *Hee that hath an eare, &c.* That is, if any man have ſpirituall diſcerning, *Let him heare what the Spirit ſaith to the Churches.* Intimating that a ſpirituall eare is a verie rare thing to be found, that which no man hath, but hee which hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, that hath had his eares *bored* by the Spirit of Chriſt, as the Scripture ſpeaks; all others are as deafe as Adders, and cannot heare the voyce of the Charmer, charme he never ſo wiſely. I would have all that live in their ſins, ſeriouſly conſider this too, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You tell us that you will turne from your ſins hereafter, and obey the call of God in the Miniſtrie of his Word: but let mee ask you this; Have you not hitherto turned the deafe eare upon God? Yes: I and ſo you will doe for the time to come;

come; and the reaſon of both, the ſame; becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. Let mercies call, corrections call; let friends call, father call, mother call, husband call, wife call; let Miniſters call, conſcience call; nay, let Chriſt himſelfe call, in what voyce he will, ſtill voyce, or lowd voyce, in words never ſo pleaſing, or never ſo piercing, yet wilt not thou heare, becauſe Chriſt is not with thy ſpirit; but with *Salomons* foole, wilt on in thy ſins, and be eternally puniſhed.

Fifthly, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt is without *feeling*, in a dead palſie all over, which how dolorous ſuch a ſtate is, in a corporall ſenſe, you know; much more dolorous in a ſpirituall ſenſe, I am ſure. As the ſpirit of man can neither ſee, ſpeak, nor hear, ſo neither can it feele, without the Spirit of Chriſt. The ſpirit of man without the Spirit of Chriſt, is dead. Chriſt is to our ſpirits, as our ſpirits are unto our bodies, their life; and life is the principle of feeling; for the dead feele nothing. *When Chriſt which is our* [*life*] *ſhall appeare*, &c. Where there is no Chriſt, there is no life; and where there is no life, there is no feeling. You know the Apoſtle ſpeaks of ſome that were *paſt feeling*, having *given themſelves over to laſciviouſneſſe*,

ouſneſſe, to worke all uncleanneſſe with greedineſſe. There the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſuch a ſenſleſneſſe, as lies upon the ſoule by a ſecond act of divine juſtice. All humane ſpirits by the firſt act of divine juſtice upon *Adam*, are naturally paſt feeling, and would give up themſelves unto all wickednes with greedines, did not God reſtraine. To be paſt feeling in this latter ſenſe, notes principally a want of divine affection; when ſinne doth not kindly affect the ſoule with ſorrow; as in the former ſenſe, when ſinne doth not at all affect the ſoule with ſorrow: when holy wayes and works doe not kindly affect the ſoule with joy; as in the other ſenſe, when they doe not affect the ſoule with joy at all; but rather diſturbe and provoke to paſſion and malice.

I would have all that live in their ſinnes, ſeriouſly thinke on this alſo, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You have heard many powerfull Sermons, which you have ſeen work admirably upon others, and yet they have made no impreſſion upon your ſpirits; and many hundred more may you heare, and no divine impreſſion at laſt be made; and the reaſon of both, one and the ſame; becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits; and by reaſon of

of this, your hearts are as Adamants, which every ſtroke hardens, but not breaks it. Let the maſter ſmite, and the man ſmite; let God ſmite, and his Miniſter ſmite, and conſcience ſmite; nay, let every member of the bodie be ſmitten with puniſhment, to affect the ſoule with ſinne, yet will it not ſtir and complaine, unleſſe Chriſt be with it.

Finally, a mans ſpirit without Chriſt, is without taſting or ſmelling: to theſe ſenſes alſo (you know) the Scripture doth allude, and therefore fitly here may I, to ſet forth fully, the unhappy condition of every ſpirit without Chriſt. You know the Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſome, *that ſavoured not the things of God*; which is a terme applyed in Scripture, to the ſenſe of ſmelling as well as to the ſenſe of taſting, and therefore for brevitie ſake do I here joyne both ſenſes together, in a Spirituall way of alluſion. Why all that have not Chriſt with their ſpirits, are ſuch as cannot rightly *ſavour ſpiritual things*; ſuch *put bitter for ſweet, and ſweet for bitter.*

I would have all you that live in your ſins, ſeriouſly thinke on this too, as a further degree of unhappineſſe. You come oft times to Wiſedomes home, and though ſhee prepare

you all Spirituall dainties, yet you can reliſh nothing, but ſome by things, that lie about the diſh, rather for ornament, then for food. And would you know the reaſon of this? 'tis becauſe Chriſt is not with your ſpirits. If Chriſt were with you, you would feed on every diſh at Wiſedomes table, on promiſes, yea, and on threatnings too: *To the hungry ſoule, every bitter thing is ſweet*, ſaith *Solomon*. All that is good and wholeſome goes down well, where Chriſt is with the Spirit. You come frequently to Wiſedomes houſe, who keeps a Table here and ,twere for a King, and yet you have leane ſhrivel'd ſoules, like men in a conſumption: every one tels you, that you look as if you were ſtarved, ſpeak and live, as if you never heard a good Sermon from yeers end, to yeers end: they tell you that you are ſo leane and feeble, that you need the benefit of all the ſpirits, that every diſh at Wiſdomes table can yeeld, to ſtrengthen you, and recover you, and yet every diſh almoſt goes againſt your ſtomacks; and that you doe eat, is without ſavour or any other vertue, and ſo you languiſh with all dainties before you; and thus you will goe on languiſhing, untill you quite conſume and periſh eternally, unleſſe Chriſt be with your ſpirits. You

You ſee (I ſuppoſe) plainly by this time, that as it is a prime and principall happineſſe to have Chriſt with our ſpirits; ſo it is a prime and principall evill and unhappineſſe, not to have Chriſt with our ſpirits. Wherefore having laid open both before you, let me entreat you all to look in upon your ſpirits, & ſee who keeps company with them, Chriſt or the divel; one of theſe two is with al our ſpirits. If Chriſt be not with our ſpirits, the devill is and will be. If Chriſt be with your ſpirits, according to the ſenſe and meaning of the Apoſtle in my text, you ſhall find it by theſe two things, *the bodie is dead becauſe of ſin; & the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe.* 'Tis *Pauls* Character of Chriſts ſpeciall preſence in the ſoul of man upon earth, and therefore of ſtrong authoritie. *And if Chriſt be in you, the bodie is dead becauſe of ſins, but the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe.* Rom. 8. 10. The body is dead becauſe of ſinne: that is, the body of corruption is deſtroyed, as in reſpect of the guilt of it, ſo in reſpect of the dominion of it. And *the ſpirit is life becauſe of righteouſneſſe:* that is, the regenerate part is *vigorous*, in reference to all righteous wayes.

And if therefore you would know whether Chriſt be with your ſpirits, ſee whether

your bodies be dead becauſe of ſinne: whether you labour to bring *every thought into ſubjection to Chriſt*; or whether you doe not *allow* your ſelves liberty to ſome evill, out of love to ſome pleaſure or profit; which is that principally, wherein the dominion of ſinne conſiſteth; as *Paul* hints unto us, where he ſaith, *The evill which I doe, I allow not.* That is, I doe not approve of it in my heart, nor plead for it with my tongue; but ſtrive againſt it with all my ſtrength; and it would be more joy to mee, to be rid of it, then if I had a Kingdome conferred to mee. This is the language right, of one that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit.

Secondly, ſee whether your *ſpirits be alive becauſe of righteouſneſſe*, if you would know whether Chriſt be with your ſpirits or not. See whether holy wayes doe heartily affect you. I rejoyced when they ſaid, Come let us goe to the houſe of the Lord, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*. He ſpake like a man, having Chriſt indeed with his ſpirit: his ſpirit leapt within him, like the babe in *Elizabeth* wombe, when they ſpake of drawing neere to God, in the duties of his worſhip. A Chriſtian that hath Chriſt with his ſpirit, ſees a taking tranſcendant beautie in all Wiſdoms wayes;

they

they are all wayes of pleasure, and pathes of peace; which is spoken in reference to such as have Christ with their spirits: for others finde no such thing in them. And his spirit opens in them like flowers in the Sunne, and smelles fragrantly, he bends and cleaves to them, in love to that souls sweetnesse, which he findes in them. And if you finde these things in you, I thinke I may safely tell you to your comfort, that Christ is with your spirits.

I may turne this Character into another form, as *Paul* doth, and tell you in his words, that *he which is joyned to the Lord is one spirit.* 1. Cor 6. 17. They that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ. This expression (I conceive) is something explained by these following words; *And the multitude of them that beleeved, were of one heart and one soule:* Acts 4. 32. or as the originall hath it ἡ καρδία καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μία, *heart & soul one:* They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ. They doe *idem velle, & idem nolle*, What Christ loves, they love; and what Christ hates they hate. Christ loves righeousnesse, and hates iniquitie: *Thou hast loved righteousnesse, and hated iniquity, &c.* Psal. 45. 7. They

that

that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this. They love righteousnesse, that is, all righteous wayes: and hate iniquity; that is, all that Gods word condemnes, 'Twas Christs meat and drink, to do his Fathers will; they that have Christ with their spirits, are one spirit with Christ in this: *'Tis joy to the just to doe judgement*, saith *Solomon*. Christ was tender about keeping the least Commandement, as well as about keeping the greatest. *Whosoever shall break one of the least Commandements, and teach men so, hee shall be called the least in the Kingdome of Heaven.* Mat. 5. 19. They that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this; they are tender to keep all Gods Commandments: lest, as well as greatest. *So shall I not be confounded, whil'st I have respect unto all thy Commandements*, saith *David*. I doe not conceive the place fore-cited so, as if Christ did account of one part of his Fathers will above another: I rather thinke that hee there speakes *Pharisaorum more*, in the Pharises dialect, who would make the world beleeve, that they mightily laboured to keepe some precepts, but others they thought, as many of us now do, that they need not to be so strict about

about. Now Christs tender Spirit for his Fathers honour, could not brook this halting in Religion; and they that have Christ with their spirits, are heart and soule one with Christ in this. That Commandement which the most say is one of the *least*, and may bee dispensed withall; or at least need not bee so strictly look't unto; that, as well as any other, whil'st a precious part of Christs will, a man that hath Christ with his spirit, will we tender to observe. *Davids* spitit smote him, for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, as well as for cutting off the life of *Uriah*: which plainely shewes, that men which have Christ with their spirits, are tender about the avoiding of small sins, as well as great.

Now possibly some of you by what hath been said, may see, that as yet you have not Christ with your spirits; I shall addresse my selfe in the first place, particularly to speake to you, and then in the second place, I shall addresse my selfe, particularly to speake to such of you, as have by what hath beene said, discerned that Christ is indeed with your spirits. To you which by what hath been said, see, that as yet Christ is not with your spirits; I have onely these two things

to

to say, labour to bewaile your great want, as persons, deeply sensible of it; and then labour to get this great want speedily supplied.

First, labour to bewaile your great want, as persons deeply affected with it. 'Tis the greatest want in the World, to want Christ to be with a mans spirit. Other wants may be afflicting wants, but this is a damning want. Other wants may make thee despised of men, but this want will make thee for ever to be abhor'd of God. Thou were better want riches, thou were better want honours; nay, thou were better want bread to put in thy head, then want Christ to be in thy heart. Thou were better want thy deere Husband, thy sweet Wife, to lie in thy bosome, then want Christ to lie there. Nay, thy soule were better to be withont thy bodie, then without Christ. If there bee any want under heaven, that makes a hell to a man, upon earth, it is this; to want Christ to be with his spirit. For what is it that makes hell, hell? a place full of sin, and full of misery? but this; that Christ is not with those spirits: they are spirits everlastingly excluded, from all communion with Christ. Now whereas great wants, make you complaine heavily

heavily, and mourne bitterly, beg the Lord to make theſe things ſinke into your ſpirits, that you may be ſenſible of this great want of wants, that your ſpirits are without Chriſt, and ſo without God in this world; that ſo all ſorrow for others wants, may meet and runne in one channell, to bewaile this great want. *Sauls* ſpeech to his ſervant, I may here fitly allude to, *Come let us returne* (ſaid he) *leſt my Father leave caring for the Aſſes, and take thought for us.* If you that mourne for this want, and that want: did but feel the want of Chriſt with your ſpirits; you would with *Kiſh* quickly leave mourning for triſles, and begin to mourne for things of waight. Come, O my ſoule! ceaſe mourning for father and mother; ceaſe mourning for huſband and wife, for children and ſubſtance; and begin to mourne for this; that thou yet liveſt Chriſtleſſe, and art in the ready way to die, and periſh remedileſſe.

When you have got your hearts to bleed inwardly, under your great want; then cry mightily to the Lord, and ſupply it. And to make your prayers prevalent, urge the promiſe of God, wherein hee hath engaged himſelfe to doe good in Chriſt, to them that are *afarre off.* Thy ſoule thou findeſt

farre

farre off from Christ: why, the promise (saith the Apostle) of Christ and salvation by him is to such. *For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are* [*a far off.*] This *Peter* spake by way of comfort, as now I doe, to such as felt their spirits without Christ; without grace and hope of glorie. Christ you see is under a generall promise, and therefore no soule should despaire of obtaining him. Hee is promised to the Jews, and not onely to them, but to us Gentiles, who *sometimes were afarre off*, not to this Gentile or that, but to all that are prickt in heart for the want of him. *For the Promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afarre off.* Let every one therefore upon this ground, that feeles his spirit prickt and wounded, for want of Christ; take words to himselfe, and goe unto God, and say.

O God! my soul is a poor Christlesse soul. I finde by wofull experience, that the Lord Iesus is not with my spirit, by reason of which I live wickedly to thy dishonour, and shall, I know not how soone, die miserably, to mine owne eternall undoing, if thou doe not shew mercie upon mee, according to thy promise. Thou hast said that thou wilt

bestow

beſtow Chriſt, grace and ſalvation, upon them that are afar off; make good thy gracious promiſe to me, whoſe ſpirit is far from Chriſt, grace and all good; ſo ſhalt thou oblige mee for ever unto thee; and I ſhall tell of thy goodneſſe as long as I live.

Having thus ſpoken what I thought fit, to ſuch as finde by what was formerly delivered, that Chriſt is not with their ſpirits; I ſhall in the next place ſpeak unto you, that by what was formerly delivered finde, that Chriſt is with your ſpirits. Something by way of counſell, and ſomething by way of Conſolation, I have to deliver unto you. Three things by way of counſell, I would commend unto you: *thankefully acknowledge this great favour; carefully preſerve it; and induſtriouſly labour to augment it.*

Firſt, thankfully acknowledge this great favour. 'Tis a pearle of great price, that God hath caſt into thy boſome, to give Chriſt to be with thy ſpirit: and for great favours, every one will acknowledge it very fit, and juſt, that they ſhould bee thankfull. 'Tis a jewell that Chriſt ſcarce gives to one of ten thouſand: and for rare gifts, every one will readily confeſſe it to be great ingratitude, not thankfully to acknowledge them. Doeſt thou

thou not heare some swear, some curse, some lie, like their father the devill? Why thou wouldest have beene such an one, had not God given Christ to bee with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some drunkards, some whoremasters, some murderers, some persecutors of the Saints? Why thou would'st have been such an one, if God had not given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some make a God of their belly, some make a God of their wealth; some proud, some mad, some putting far from them the evill day, living as if they should never die? Why, thou wouldest have been such an one, had not God given Christ to be with thy spirit. Doest thou not see some *Nabals*, some *Iezabels*, some *Cains*, some *Demases*, some *Iudases*? Why, amongst the number of these wouldest thou have been, had not God given Christ to bee with thy spirit. Wherefore magnifie the Lord with all thy might, and let all that is within thee praise his holy Name. Thinke but how it was with thee, when thy spirit was without Christ. How *foolish thou wast serving divers lusts*: how the God of this world which rules mightily in the children of disobedience, did rule mightily in thee. How weak

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thy ſpirit was, and eaſily overcome and carried captive of everie luſt. How drunken thy ſpirit was, and reel'd from one opinion to another; one day thou thoughtſt thus and thus, and another day thou thoughtſt quite contrarie. I ſay, do but think of theſe things, and how the Lord might juſtly have left thee ſtill, to have gone on thus, untill thou hadſt periſhed, as hee hath done many thouſands, & then be unthankful for the communion of Chriſt with thy ſpirit, if thou canſt. It was this conſideration that ſet *Paul* a wondring at the goodneſſe of the Lord. *I was a blaſphemer, a perſecutour, &c. yet I obtained mercie.* Hee circumflexes this terme [*I*] *yet* [*I*] *obtained mercie*, &c. It was wonderfull in his eye, that God ſhould give Chriſt to dwell with ſuch a bloudy blaſpheming ſpirit, as hee had. In this way let us goe to work, to raiſe our dull ſpirits, to magnifie the free goodneſſe of the Lord: for 'tis a work of all works, that God loves. I was a man of a verie proud, paſſionate, malicious, uncleane ſpirit; and yet I obtained mercie. God hath given Chriſt to be with this depraved ſpirit, and in a little time hee hath done verie much, and made a manifeſt change in my ſpirit; of verie proud, he hath made

made it in some measure humble; of verie passionate, in some measure patient; of verie malicious, in some measure loving; of verie uncleane, in some measure continent. O! the riches of his love; *how unsearchable is his mercie, and his love past finding out?*

Secondly, as I would have you thankfully acknowledge this great favour, so I would have you carefully labour to preserve it. You find that you have Christ with your spirits, take heed you do not lose him. Thou wert better lose thy life, than lose the speciall presence of Christ with this spirit. 'Tis a prime and principall blessing, as thou hast heard; a blessing of more worth than this world; nay, of more worth than thy soule, which Christ values above the world. Now choyce things, wee are usually verie carefull of, and keep them choycely. Christ totally (I know) can no man lose, which hath him after a speciall manner, present with his spirit: but according to some prime and principall operations, hee may: according to others, verie far, though not totally. A man may lose the presence of Christ with his spirit totally, as a Comforter. *The Comforter which should releeve my soule, is far from me*, saith *Jeremiah*, Lam. 1. 16. in the person

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of the afflicted Church. 'Tis probable enough, that *Davids* ſpirit was thus ſtript of Chriſt, by his dolorous complaints, which frequently we read of. *Is his mercie cleave gone for ever? doth his promiſe faile for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath hee in anger ſhut up his tender mercies? Will the Lord caſt off for ever? and will hee be favourable no more?* Pſal. 77 7 8. 9. Some carriages in Chriſtians towards Chriſt, make Chriſt totally alter his carriage towards them; though for his promiſe ſake, hee will never totally remove himſelfe from them.

As when Chriſtians doe not keep their watch ſtrictly againſt ſin, in all the occaſions of it; then Chriſt, in ſtead of being a Comforter, becomes a convincer; and in ſtead o ſpeaking ſweet things, hee ſpeaks verie bitter unto the ſoule. This was the caſe of *David* and *Peter*. Or when Chriſtians are careleſſe, and ſluggiſh, to maintaine and encreaſe their ſweet communion with Chriſt, unyeelding to the ſweet motions of the ſpirit of Chriſt, and turning oft times the deafe eare againſt the ſtill voyce behind them, which ſaith, *this is the way, walk in it*. Then Chriſt drawes a curtaine between the ſpirit of man and himſelfe, and leaves the ſpirit of

man in the dark, and full of feares. This is notably illustrated by that language of the Spouse, *It is the voyce of my Beloved that knocketh, saying; Open to mee, my Sister, my Love, my Love, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.* The Church was convinced of this, that it was her Beloved, seeking neerer communion with her, and yet observe how she replyes. *I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them? I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had withdrawne himselfe and was gone; my soule failed when hee spake; I sought him, but I could not find him: I called him, but he gave me no answer:* Cant 5. You that find the presence of Christ with your spirits, as a Comforter, make Christian use of what I have said, that you may still enjoy so great a mercie. And if you lose the Lord Jesus Christ, as a Comforter to your spirits, miserable comforters will all other things prove unto you. You will mourne, and none will be able to comfort you, if Christ as a Comforter forsake your spirits.

Secondly, as a leader, a man may verie far lose the communion of Christ with his spirit. As if a Christian take libertie to sin against

againſt that light, which Chriſt hath ſet up in his ſpirit; this will make Chriſt firſt or laſt (if not timely lookt unto) leave a man to his owne underſtanding, to ſteare his courſe; and then will ſuch a man declare himſelfe quickly, to be a foole and a beaſt, in many points, as *David* ſaith. Have you not ſeene Chriſtians of great light erre in judgement, and erre in practice? Whence comes this weakneſſe, but from hence, that Chriſt as a leader ſtands aloofe from their ſpirits? which is a plaine demonſtration that a man may loſe the preſence of Chriſt with his ſpirit, as a leader. *David* (I beleeve) found the truth of this, as well as of the former, by wofull experience. A man may collect ſo much cleerly, from his owne words. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy ſpirit from me:* Pſal. 51. 11. The Spirit of God is therefore called by *David* a *holy* Spirit, becauſe holy in himſelfe (the Spirit of the holy God, as hee ſaid to *Daniel*) but principally here, as I conceive, *Ab officio:* becauſe the worker of holineſſe in us, *David* doubtleſſe by his fall, found an exceeding weakneſſe in his Spirit, unto all good, over what formerly hee did, and ſtrong propenſitie again to erre; as everie act of ſin leaves

ſeed and ſpawn upon the ſpirit, to bring forth more, to cover the firſt, or to commit the like againe. But more then all this; hee found Chriſt to ſtand aloofe from his ſpirit; not exerciſing that ſpeciall dominion in his ſpirit, as before, for the ſubduing of luſt, and ſuggeſting of holy motions and deſires; but leaving him as it were to himſelfe, as one with whom hee would have no more to do. And therefore doth *David* ſo dolefully complaine, *Caſt mee not away from thy preſence, and take not thy* [*holy*] *Spirit from mee:* you therefore which finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, as a tender leader, take heed of ſinning againſt any part of that light, which he ſets up in your underſtandings, or againſt any motions of his ſpirit, which hee ſuggeſts unto you; leſt hee leave you to your own light, and to your owne ſtrength: and then will you run from leſſe ſins to greater, from one ſinne to another, like *David* and *Peter*, to the ſcandalizing of the Goſpel, and the deſperate wounding of your own ſouls.

The third and laſt thing that I would commend unto you, by way of counſell, is this: labour to augment this great favour. You finde Chriſt with your ſpirits, labour induſtriouſly, to have Chriſt more and more

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with your ſpirits. 'Tis a prime and principall bleſſing, as you have heard, to have Chriſt with your ſpirits; therefore labour to get as much of this favour and happineſſe as poſſibly you can. Thou haſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit as a teacher; why thou maiſt have him yet more intimate with thee, and open unto thee, in imparting divine myſteries, if thou *follow on to know*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, if thou humbly forget, and look over all thou haſt, and preſſe hard after more: the things thou knoweſt not, Chriſt will teach thy ſpirit, morning by morning, as by the learned. Chriſt hath taught thy ſpirit many truths; why, he will *lead thy ſpirit into all truth*, if thou urge his promiſe and beleeve. He will *fill thee with the knowledge of his will in all wiſdome and ſpirituall underſtanding*, If thou pray for it as *Paul* did for the *Coloſſians*.

Thou findeſt Chriſt with thy ſpirit as a Comforter; why thou maiſt have yet much more conſolation from him, if thou ſtudy to be more pliable to him. Thou haſt Chriſt diſtilling drops of conſolation into thy ſpirit, now and then; why thou maiſt have Chriſt powring in flagons of love into thy ſoule, filling thee with joy unſpeakable and full of glory, if thou bring thy ſpirit to be more low-

ly and meek; for such finde most *rest to their soules:* if thou carefully keep *coming to Christ still* in every pressure of spirit; for such finde most *ease:* that is renewing faith still, as thou reneweſt thy sinnes.

Thou findeſt Christ with thy spirit, as a quickner and strengthner to dutie; why thou maiſt finde him yet more mightie with thy spirit this way, if thou powre out thy spirit often with *David* for quickning grace; and if thou more deny thine owne strength, and caſt thy selfe more upon his. Could we but attain *Pauls* height in self-deniall, to be nothing in our selves (*though I am nothing* saith he) wee should find Christ gloiously present still with our spirits, and be more constant in zeal and strength to every good worke, then we are. I conclude this thus, be so tractable to Christ, that thou maiſt with *Mary*, win upon Christ still; and thinke that thou canſt never be neer enough to him, nor intimate enough with him; and this is the ready way, to have a heaven upon earth: for the more wee get Christ to be with our spirits, the more truly may we be said to be in heaven.

The laſt thing that I have to say to you, that finde Christ with your spirits, is matter of

of conſolation. Here is comfort for you againſt famine. When thy body wants food, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit, will give that meat to eat, which the world knows not of; ſo that when others repine, and *curſe God and their King* in their extremitie, as the Prophet ſpeakes; thou ſhalt bee patient in prayer to him, who can command Ravens to bring thee bread and fleſh to feed on; and will, rather then thou ſhalt ſtarve, if thy life may be more to his glory, then thy death.

Here's comfort for you againſt the ſword. In the midſt of all troubles and fears, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit wil bear thee up admirably. What is the face of an enemy to terrifie; if Chriſt be with thy ſpirit. What is the ſpoiling of thy goods? nay, what is the ſpoiling of thy body? if Chriſt bee with thy ſoule. A Mountaine of miſery, is but as a Mole-hill, if Chriſt ſupport the ſpirit. To think of the Sword is a naked reference to fleſh and blood, and ſo nothing is more terrible: but let us that feare the Lord thinke of it, in reference to Chriſt that is with our ſpirits, and then wee ſhall not bee troubled, though wee heare of warres and rumours of warres, no more then at the rumours of any other calamity.

Here is comfort for you againſt the Plague, which is here and there ſcattered in the kingdome. What is any diſeaſe to the bodie, if Chriſt be with thy ſoule? As the outward man decayeth, the inward man ſhall bee renewed daily, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. When thy bodie is full of pain, thy ſoule ſhall be full of comfort, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. When thy body is ſealed with ſpots of death, thy ſoule ſhall bee ſealed with the holy Ghoſt unto eternall life, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. The plague of the body is nothing, if this plague of plagues be not upon the ſpirit, to wit, deſtitute of Chriſt.

Here is comfort for you againſt perſecution. When men frowne upon thee without, Chriſt will ſmile upon thy ſpirit within: when men lade the outward man with reproaches, Chriſt will fill thy inward man with comforts: when men ſhut up thy body from the communion of Saints, Chriſt will give thy ſpirit a large freedome of communion with himſelfe. When men ſtrike thy bodie, Chriſt will ſtroke thy ſoule: when men kill thy body, Chriſt will ſave thy ſoule. In a word, as the afflictions of Chriſt abound in thy body, ſo the conſolations of Chriſt

ſhall

ſhall abound in thy ſoule, becauſe Chriſt is with thy ſpirit. Name any miſery that is incident to man and here's comfort to be ſuckt out of this point, to oppoſe unto it Finally in life, in death, and eternally after death, Chriſt that is with thy ſpirit will bee gaine unto thee. Thy life hee will make comfortable; thy death hopefull; thy being after death eternally joyfull. Wherefore I will conclude my Sermon for the good of you, as Saint *Paul* doth his Epiſtle for the good of *Timothy*, *The Lord Ieſus Chriſt be with your ſpirits.*

Trinuni Deo gloria.

FINIS.